

THE ^{103d}
Living Temple,
OR, A
DESIGNED IMPROVEMENT
Of that NOTION,
THAT
A GOOD MAN
IS THE
TEMPLE of GOD.

By JOHN HOWE, M. A. Some-
time Fellow of M. C. Oxon.

L O N D O N :

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JOHN HON. E. M. A. 1802
and J. M. 1802

The Epistle Dedicatory.

this Discourse; that being the Atheism most in fashion.

Nor is any thing more pertinent to the design of the discourse intended concerning Gods Temple; which importing worship to be done to him, requires first a steady belief that he is.

And surely the [E] inscribed of old, as Plutarch tells us, on the Delphick Temple; signifying (as, after divers other conjectures, he concludes it to do) Thou dost exist, is an inscription, much more fitly set in view, at our entrance into the Temple of the Living God, whose name is I AM.

Amidst the pleasant entertainments of which Temple (made more intimate to you than humane discourse can make it) may you spend many happy days in this world, as a preparative, and introduction to an happier eternity in the other. Whereto he is under many and deep obligations, by any means, to contribute to his uttermost, who must (especially in the offices relating to this Temple) profess himself,

My Honoured Lord,

Your Lordships most humbly

Devoted Servant

John Howe.

John Brown

THE LIVING TEMPLE,

Or the Notion Improved,
That a Good Man is the Temple of God.

PART I.

CHAP. I.

This Notion Common. Authorities needless. Insignificant with the Atheistical. Who have made it more necessary to defend Religion, and a Temple in general than this or that. Better defended against them by Practice and Use than Argument. Whereof they are incapable. Often Disputes of its Principles not necessary to the Practice of Religion. Some consideration of those supposed in the general Notion of a Temple, pertinent (however) to this Discourse.

IT is so well known that this Notion hath long obtain'd in the world, that we need not quote sayings to avouch it; wherewith not the sacred Writings only, but others,

B

EVEN

I.

The Living Temple.

even of Pagans themselves, would plentifully furnish us.

But as Authorities are, in a plain case, needless to unprejudic'd minds; so will they be useless to the prejudic'd, be the case never so plain. Nor is any prejudice deeper, or less vincible than that of profane minds against Religion. With such, it would, in the present argument, signify little to tell them what hath been said or thought before by any others. Not because it is their general course to be so very circumspect and wary, as never to approve or assent to any thing, unless upon the clearest and most convincing demonstration: but from their peculiar dislike of those things only, that are of this special import and tendency. Discourse to them what you will of a Temple, and it will be nauseous and unfavoury: not as being cross to their reason (which they are as little curious to gratify as any other sort of men) but to their ill humour, and the disaffected temper of their mind; whence also (though they cannot soon or easily get that mastery over their understandings herein, yet because they would fain have it so) they do what they can to believe Religion nothing else but the effect of timorous fancy, and a Temple, consequently, one of the most idle impertinencies in the world.

To these, the discussion of the notion we have proposed to consider, will be thought a beating the air, an endeavour to give consistency to a shadow: And if their reason and
power

power could as well serve their purpose as their anger and scorn, they would soon tear up the holy ground on which a Temple is set, and wholly subvert the Sacred Frame.

I speak of such as deny the existence of the ever blessed Deity; or (if they are not arrived to that express and formed mis-belief) *whose hearts are enclined*, and ready to determine, even against their mis-giving and more suspicious minds, *there is no God*. Who, if they cannot as yet believe, do wish there were none: And so strongly as in a great degree to prepare them for that belief. That would fain banish him not only out of all their thoughts, but the world too. And to whom it is so far from being a grateful sound, That the Tabernacle of God is with men on earth, that they grudge to allow him a place in heaven. At least if they are willing to admit the existence of any God at all, do say to him, Depart from us; and would have him so confined to heaven, that he and they may have nothing to do with one another. And do therefore rack their impious wits to serve their hypothesis either way; that under its protection they may securely indulge themselves in a course upon which they find the apprehension of a God interesting himself in humane affairs, would have a very unfavourable and threatening aspect.

They are therefore constrained to take great pains with themselves, to discipline and chastise their minds and understandings to that tameness and patience, as contentedly to suffer

the razing out of their most natural impressions and sentiments. And they reckon they have arrived to a very Heroical perfection, when they can pass a scoff upon any thing that carries the least signification with it of the fear of God; and can be able to laugh at the weak and squeamish folly of those softer and effeminate minds, that will trouble themselves with any thoughts or cares how to please and propitiate a Deity: And doubt not but they have made all safe, and effectually done their business when they have learned to put the ignominious titles of frenzy and folly upon devotion in whatsoever dress, or garb; to cry canting to any serious mention of the name of God, and break a bold adventurous jeast upon any the most sacred Mysteries, or decent and awful solemnities of Religion.

II.

These content not themselves to encounter this or that Sect, but Mankind; and reckon it too mean and inglorious an atchievement to overturn one sort of Temple or another; but would down with them all even to the ground.

And they are in reason and justice to pardon the emulation which they provoke of vying with them as to the universality of their design; and not regret it if they find there be any that think it their duty to wave a while serving the Temple of *this* or *that* party, as less considerable, to defend that *one* wherein all men have a common interest and concernment.

Since matters are brought to that exigency
and

and hazard, that it seems less necessary to contend about this or that mode of Religion, as whether there ought to be any at all. What was said of a former age could never better agree to any than our own, *that none was ever more fruitful of Religions and barren of Religion or true Piety.* It concerns us to consider whether the fertility of those many doth not as well cause as accompany a barrenness in this one. And (since the iniquity of the world hath made that too suitable, which were otherwise unseemly in it self, to speak of a Temple as a fortified place, whose own sacredness ought ever to have been its sufficient fortification) it is time to be aware, lest our forgetful heat and zeal in the defence of this or that outwork, do expose (not to say betray) the main fortress to assault and danger. Whilst it hath long been by this means, a neglected forsaken thing; and is more decayed by vacancy and disuse, than it could ever have been by the most forcible battery; so as even to promise the rude assailant an easy victory. Who fears to insult over an empty dispirited dead Religion! which alive and shining in its native glory (as that Temple doth which is compacted of lively stones united to the living corner stone) bears with it a magnificence and state that would check a profane look, and dazle the presumptuous eye that durst venture to glance at it obliquely, or with disrespect. The Temple of the living God, manifestly animated by his vital presence, would not only dismay oppo-

sition, but command Veneration also: and be its own both Ornament and defence. Nor can it be destitute of that Presence, if we our selves render it not inhospitable, and make not its proper inhabitant become a stranger at home. If we preserve in our selves a capacity of the Divine Presence, and keep the Temple of God in a posture fit to receive him; he would then no more forsake it, than the soul, a sound, and healthy body, not violated in any vital part: But if he forsake it once, it then becomes an exposed and despised thing. And as the most impotent inconsiderable enemy can securely trample on the dead body of the greatest Heroe, that alive carried awfulness and terror in his looks: so is the weak spirited Atheist become as bold now as he was willing, before, to make rude attempts upon the Temple of God, when *He* hath been provoked to leave it, who is its life, strength, and glory.

III.

Therefore as they who will not be treacherous to the interest of God and man, must own an obligation and necessity to apply themselves to the serious endeavour of restoring the life and honour of Religion. So will the case it self be found to point out to us the proper course in order hereto. That is, that it must rather be endeavoured by practice than by disputation. By contending, every one with himself, to excite the love of God in his own breast; rather than with the profane adversary to kindle his anger; more aiming to foment and cherish the domestick continual fire of
God's

God's Temple and Altar, than transmit a flame into the enemies Camp. For what can this signifie? and it seldom fails to be the event of disputing against prejudice (especially of disputing for the sum of Religion at once against the pre-possession of a sensual prophane temper, and a violent inclination and resolvedness to be wicked) to beget more wrath than conviction, and sooner to incense the impatient wretch than enlighten him. And by how much the more cogent and enforcing reasonings are used, and the less is left the confounded baffled creature to say, on behalf of a cause so equally deplorate and vile: The more he finds himself concern'd to fortifie his obstinate will, and supply his want of reason with resolution. To find out the most expedite ways of diverting from what he hath no mind to consider. To entertain himself with the most stupifying pleasures (that must serve the same turn that opium is wont to do in the case of broken unquiet sleep) or whatsoever may most effectually serve to mortifie any Divine Principle, and destroy all sense of God out of his Soul.

And how grateful herein, and meritorious often are the assistent railleries of servile (and it may be mercenary) wits? How highly shall he oblige them, that can furnish out a Libel against Religion, and help them with more artificial spight to blaspheme what they cannot disprove. And now shall the scurrilous Pasquil, and a few Bottles, work a more effectual

confutation of Religion, than all the reason and argument in the world shall be able to countervail. This proves too often the unhappy issue of mis-applying what is most excellent in its own kind and place to improper and incapable Subjects.

IV.

And who sees not this to be the case with the modern Atheist, who hath been pursu'd with that strength and vigour of argument even in our own days, that would have baffled persons, of any other temper than their own, into shame and silence? And so as no other support hath been left to Irreligion, than a senseless stupidity, an obstinate resolvedness not to consider, a faculty to stifle an argument with a jeast, to charm their reason by sensual softnesses into a dead sleep; with a strict and circumspect care that it may never awake into any exercise above the condition of doz'd and half-witted persons; or if it do, by the next debauch presently to lay it fast again. So that the very Principle fails in this sort of men, where-to in reasoning we should appeal and apply our selves. And it were almost the same thing to offer arguments to the senseless images or forsaken carcases of men. It belongs to the Grandeur of Religion to neglect the impotent assaults of these men: as it is a piece of glory, and bespeaks a worthy persons right understanding and just value of himself, to disdain the combat with an incompetent or a foiled enemy. It is becoming and seemly that the grand ancient and received Truth which tends
to,

to, and is the reason of the godly life, do sometimes keep state; and no more descend to perpetual repeated janglings with every scurrilous and impertinent trifler, than a great and redoubted Prince would think it fit to dispute the Rights of his Crown with a drunken distracted Fool or a Mad-man.

Men of Atheistical Perswasions having abandon'd their reason, need what will more powerfully strike their sense: Storms and Whirlwinds, Flames and Thunderbolts; things not so apt immediately to work upon their understanding as their fear, and that will astonish that they may convince: That the great God make himself known by the Judgments which he executes. *Stripes are for the back of fools* (as they are justly stiled that say in *their hearts There is no God:*) But if it may be hoped any gentler method may prove effectual with any of them, we are rather to expect the good effect, from the steady uniform course of their Actions and Conversation, who profess reverence and devotedness to an eternal Being: And the correspondence of their way to their avow'd Principle, that acts them on agreeably to it self, and may also incur the sense of the beholder, and gradually invite and draw his observation; than from the most severe and necessitating argumentation, that exacts a sudden assent.

At least in a matter of so clear and commanding evidence, reasoning many times looks like trifling; and out of an hearty concernedness

ness and jealousie for the honour of Religion, one would rather it should march on, with an Heroical neglect of bold and malapert cavillers: and only demonstrate and recommend it self, by its own vigorous, comely, coherent course, than make it self cheap by discussing at every turn its Principles. As that Philosopher who thought it the fittest way to confute the Sophisms against motion, only by walking.

But we have nothing so considerable objected against practical Religion as well as to deserve the name of a Sophism: (at least no sophism so perplexing in the case of Religious as of natural motion) Jeers and Sarcasms are the most weighty convincing arguments. And let the deplorate crew mock on: There are those in the world that will think they have, however, reason enough to persist in the way of godliness: and that have already laid the foundation of that reverence which they bear to a Deity, more strongly, than to be shaken, and beaten off from it by a jest.

And therefore will not think it necessary to have the Principles of their Religion vindicated afresh every time they are called to the practice of it. For surely they would be religious upon very uncertain terms, that will think themselves concern'd to suspend or discontinue their course, as oft as they are encountred in it, with a wry mouth, or a distorted look; or that are apt to be put out of conceit with their Religion by the laughter of a fool: Or by their cavils and taunts against the Rules and Principles

ples of it, whom only their own sensual temper, and impatience of serious thoughts have made willing to have them false. That any indeed should commence Religious, and persist with blind Zeal in *this* or *that* discriminating Profession without ever considering why they should do so; is unmanly and absurd: especially when a gross ignorance of the true reasons and grounds of Religion shall be shadowed over with a pretended awe and scrupulousness to enquire about things so sacred. And an inquisitive temper shall have an ill character put upon it, as if *rational* and *profane* were words of the same signification. Or as if reason and judgment were utterly execrated, and an unaccountable enthusiastick fury baptiz'd and hallowed the ^{*}only Principle of Religion. But when the matter hath undergone already a severe inquisition, and been searcht to the bottom; principles have been examined, the strength and firmness hath been tried of its deepest and most fundamental grounds, and an approving judgment been pass'd in the case, and a resolution thereupon taken up of a suitable and correspondent practice. After all this it were a vain and unwarrantable curiosity, to be perpetually perplexing ones easie path, with new and suspicious researches into the most acknowledg'd things. Nor were this course a little prejudicial to the *design* and *end* of Religion (if we will allow it any at all) the refining of our minds, and the fitting us for an happy eternity: For when shall that building be finish'd, the foundations

dations whereof must be every day torn up anew, upon pretence of further caution, and for more diligent search? Or when will he reach his journeys end that is continually vex'd (and often occasion'd to go back from whence he came) by causeless anxieties about his way; and whether ever he began a right course yea or no?

Many go securely on in a course most ignominiously wicked and vile, without ever debating the matter with themselves, or enquiring if there be any rational principle to justify or bear them out. Much more may they with a chearful confidence persist in their well-chosen way; that have once settled their resolutions about it, upon firm and assured grounds and principles, without running over the same course of reasonings with themselves, in reference to each single devotional act; or thinking it necessary every time they are to pray, to have it prov'd to them there is a God.

And because yet many of these do need excitation, and though they are not destitute of pious sentiments and inclinations, and have somewhat in them of the ancient foundations and frame of a Temple; have yet by neglect suffered it to grow into decay: It is therefore the principal intendment of this discourse, not to assert the Principles of Religion against those with whom they have no place, but to propound what may some way tend to reinforce and strengthen them where they visibly languish; and awaken such as profess a devoted-
ness

ness to God to the speedy and vigorous endeavour of repairing the ruines of his Temple in their own Breasts. That they may thence hold forth a visible representation of an in-dwelling Deity, in effects and actions of life worthy of such a Presence, and render his enshrined glory transparent to the view and conviction of the irreligious and profane. Which hath more of hope in it, and is likely to be to better purpose, than disputing with them that more know how to jest than reason; and better understand the relishes of meat and drink, than the strength of an argument.

But though it would be both an ungrateful and insignificant labour, and as talking to the wind, to discourse of Religion with persons that have abjur'd all seriousness, and that cannot endure to think: And would be like fighting with a storm, to contend against the blasphemy and outrage of insolent mockers at whatever is Sacred and Divine; and were too much a debasing of Religion to retort Sarcasms, with men not capable of being talkt with in any other than such (that is, their own) language. Yet it wants neither its use nor pleasure; to the most composed minds, and that are most exempt from wavering herein, to view the frame of their Religion, as it aptly, and even naturally, rises and grows up from its very foundations. To contemplate its first Principles, which they may in the mean time find no present cause or inclination to dispute. They will know how to consider its
most

VI.

most fundamental grounds, not with doubt or suspicion, but with admiration and delight; and can with a calm and silent pleasure, enjoy the repose and rest of a quiet and well-assured mind. Rejoycing and contented to know to themselves (when others refuse to partake with them in this joy) and feel all firm and stable under them, whereupon either the practice or the hopes of their Religion do depend.

And there may be also many others of good and pious inclinations, that have never yet apply'd themselves to consider the principal and most fundamental grounds of Religion, so as to be able to give or discern any tolerable reason of them. For either the sluggishness of their own temper may have indisposed them to any more painful and laborious exercise of their minds, and made them be content with the easier course of taking every thing upon trust, and imitating the example of others; or they have been unhappily mis-informed that it consists not with the reverence due to Religion to search into the grounds of it. Yea and may have laid this for one of its main grounds that no exercise of Reason may have any place about it. Or perhaps having never tried, they apprehend a greater difficulty in coming to a clear and certain resolution herein, than indeed there is. Now such need to be excited to set their own thoughts awork this way, and to be assisted herein. They should therefore consider who gave them the understandings which they fear to use? And can they use them to better pur-

purpose or with more gratitude to him who made them intelligent, and not brute Creatures, than in labouring to know, that they may also by a reasonable service, worship and adore their Maker? Are they not to use their very senses about the matters of Religion? For the invisible things of God, even his eternal power and Godhead are clearly seen, &c. And their Faith comes by hearing. But what? are these more Sacred and Divine; and more akin to Religion than their Reason and Judgment: Without which also their sense can be of no use to them herein? Or is it the best way of making use of what God hath revealed of himself, by whatsoever means, not to understand what he hath revealed? It is most true indeed, that when we once come clearly to be informed that God hath revealed this or that thing, we are then readily to subject (and not oppose) our feeble reasonings to his plain revelation. And it were a most insolent and uncreaturally arrogance, to contend or not yield him the cause, though things have to us seemed otherwise. But it were as inexcusable negligence, not to make use of our understandings to the best advantage; that we may both know that such a Revelation is Divine, and what it signifies after we know whence it is. And any one that considers, will soon see it were very unreasonable, at least, to alledge the written Divine Revelation, as the ground of his Religion, till he have gone lower, and fore-known some things (by and by to be insisted on)

on) as preparatory and fundamental to the knowledge of this,

And because it is obvious to suppose how great an increase of strength and vigour, pious minds may receive hence, how much it may animate them to the service of the Temple, and contribute to their more chearful progress in a religious course: It will therefore not be besides our present purpose, but very pursuant to it, to consider a while, not in the contentious way of brawling and captious disputation (the noise whereof is as unsuitable to the Temple as that of axes and hammers) but of calm and sober discourse; the more principal and lowermost grounds upon which the frame of Religion rests, and to the supposal whereof the notion and use of any such thing as a Temple in the world, do owe themselves.

CHAP. II.

The two more principal grounds which a Temple supposes. 1. The existence of God. 2. His Conversableness with men : Both argued from common consent. The former doubtful if ever wholly deny'd in former days. The latter also implied in the known general practice of some or other Religion. Evidenc'd, in that some, no strangers to the world, have thought it the difference of man. The immodesty and rashness of the persons from whom any opposition can be expected. These two grounds proposed to be more strictly considered apart. And first the existence of God. Where first the notion of God is assigned. The parts whereof are proposed to be evinc'd severally of some existent Being. 1. Eternity. 2. Self-origination. 3. Independency. 4. Necessity of existence. 5. Self-activity. The impossibility this world should be this necessary self-active Being. The inconsistency of necessary alterable matter, more largely deduced in a marginal digression. 6. Life. 7. Vast and mighty power. A Corollary.

NOW the grounds more necessary to be laid down, and which are supposed in the most general notion of a Temple, are especially these two ;

i.

C

The

The Living Temple.

{ The existence of God, and
 { His conversableness with men,

For no notion of a Temple can more easily occur to any ones thoughts, or is more agreeable to common acceptation; than that it is *an habitation wherein God is pleased to dwell among men.*

Therefore to the designation and use of it, or (which is all one) to the intention and exercise of Religion, the belief or perswasion is necessary of those two things (the same which we find made necessary on the same account)

Heb. 11. 6. *That God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him;* as will appear when the manner and design of that his abode with men shall be considered.

These are the grounds upon which the sacred frame of a Temple ought to stand, and without which it must be acknowledged an unsupported, airy fabrick. And since it were vain to discourse what a Temple is, or whereto the notion of it may be applied; unless it be well resolved that there is, or ought to be *any such thing.* The strength and firmness of this its double ground should be tried and searcht, and of its pretensions thereto.

11. And though it be not necessary in a matter that is so plain, and wherein so much is to be said otherwise; yet it will not be impertinent to consider, First, what Prescription (which in clearing of titles is not wont to signifie nothing) will signifie in the present case. And,

First, For the existence of God, we need not

not labour much to shew how constantly and generally it hath been acknowledg'd through the whole world; it being so difficult to produce an uncontroverted instance of any that ever deny'd it in more ancient times. For as for them whose names have been infamous amongst men heretofore 'upon that account, there hath been that said that, at least, wants not probability for the clearing them of so foul an imputation: That is, that they were maliciously represented as having deny'd the existence of a Deity, because they impugned and derided the vulgar conceits, and poetical fictions of those days concerning the multitude, and the ridiculous attributes of their imaginary Deities.

Of which sort *Cicero* mentions not a few; Their being inflam'd with Anger, and mad with Lust, their Wars, Fights, Wounds, their Hatreds, Discords, their Births and Deaths, &c.

Who though he speak less favourably of some of these men, and mentions one as doubting whether there were any Gods or no; (for which cause his Book in the beginning whereof he had intimated that doubt, (as *Cotta* is brought in, informing us) was publickly burnt at *Athens*, and himself banisht his Country) and two others * as exprelly denying them; † *Diogenes* yet the more generally decried † Patron of Atheism (as he hath been accounted) he

(who as *Diogenes Laertius* in *Aristip.* reports) was surnamed *ἄθεός*, afterwards *ἑτεροθεός*. † *Epicurus*, whom also his own Epistle to *Menaeus* in *Diogenes Laertius* acquits of Atheism, but not of Irreligion; as hereafter may be observed.

Parker
Tentam.

De natura
Deorum,
lib. 1.

Protag.
Abderitides:

* *Diogenes*
and *Theo-*
coras Cyre-
naiensis

makes *Velleius* highly vindicate from this imputation, and say of him that he was the first that took notice that even nature it self had impressed the notion of God upon the minds of all men: who also gives us these as his words, "What Nation is there or sort of men that hath not without teaching, a certain anticipation of the Gods, which he calls a prolepsis, a certain preventive, or fore-conceived information of a thing in the mind, without which nothing can be understood, or sought, or disputed of. Unto which purpose the same Author (as is commonly observed) elsewhere speaks; That there is no Nation so barbarous, no one of all men so savage, as that some apprehension of the Gods hath not tinged his mind. That many do think indeed corruptly of them, which is (saith he) the effect of vicious custom. But all do believe there is a Divine Power and Nature. Nor (as he there proceeds) hath mens talking and agreeing together effected this. It is not an opinion settled in mens minds by publick constitutions and sanctions. But in every matter the consent of all Nations is to be reckoned a law of Nature.

*Cicero
Tuscul.
Quest. l.*

And whatever the apprehensions of those few (and some others that are wont to be mention'd under the same vile character) were in this matter, yet so inconsiderable hath the dissent been; that, as another most ingenious Pagan Author writes, "In so great a contentment and variety of opinions (that is concern-

*Maxim.
Tyr. diff.
I.*

ing

“ing what God is) herein you shall see the
 “law and reason of every Country to be har-
 “monious and one. That there is one God the
 “King and Father of all---That the many are
 “but the servants and *co-rulers* unto God.
 “That herein the Greek and the Barbarian
 “says the same thing, The Islander and the
 “Inhabitant of the Continent, The Wise and
 “the foolish: Go to the utmost bounds of the
 “Ocean, and you find God there. But if
 “(says he) in all time there have been two or
 “three, an atheistical, vile, senseless sort of per-
 “sons,* whose own eyes and ears deceive them,
 “and who are maimed in their very soul, an
 “irrational and sterile sort, as monstrous crea-
 “tures, as a Lion without courage, an Ox
 “without horns, or a bird without wings.
 “Yet out of those you shall understand some-
 “what of God. For they know and confess
 “him whether *they will or no.* 3. Yea, and
 the use of a Temple, and the exercise of Re-
 ligion (which suppose the second ground also
 as well as the first) have been so very common
 (though not altogether equally common with
 the former, that it is the observation of that
 famed moralist, “That if one travel the world,
 “’tis possible to find Cities without Walls,
 “without Letters, without Kings, without
 “Wealth, without Coin, without Schools and
 “Theatres. But a City without a Temple, or
 “that useth no Worship, Prayers, &c. no one
 “ever saw. And he believes a City may more
 “easily be built without a foundation (or

*ἡμεῖς οὖν
 ἰσχυρὸν ἔχοντες
 εἰσιν.*

*οὐκ ἔστιν ὁμοίως
 ὁ Θεός.*

*ἡμεῖς οὖν ἰσχυρὸν
 ἔχοντες εἰσιν.
 ὁ Θεός οὖν.*

III.

*Plutarch.
 adversus
 Colotem.*

Πρόεδρος: Χρ.
Λατ.

"ground to set it on) than any community of
"men have or keep a consistency **without Re-
ligion.*

IV.

Philo. libr.
de eo quod
Deterius
potiori in-
fid.
μεν θ' ἰνὴ-
της, ἀνθρ-
ωπίνης, καὶ
ἐν ἑαυτῇ καὶ
ἀνθρῳ θ',
p. 180.

4. And it is no mean argument of the commonness of Religion, that there have been some in the world (and those no Idiots neither) that have accounted it the most confluent and distinguishing thing in humane nature. So that Platonick Jew judgeth in vocation
“ of God with hope towards him to be, if we
“ will speak the truth, the only genuine pro-
“ perty of *Man*, and faith that only he who is
“ acted by such an hope is a man, and he that
“ is destitute of this hope is no man, preferring
this account to the common definition (which
he says is only of the concrete of man) that he
is a reasonable and mortal living creature. And
yet he extends not reason further, that is, to the
inferior creatures, for he had expressly said above
“ That they who have no hope towards God,
“ have no part or share in the rational nature.

Herbert de
Verit.

And a noble person of our own says, "That upon accurate search, *Religion* and *Faith* appear the only ultimate differences of man; whereof neither Divine perfection is capable, nor brutal imperfection." Reason in his account descending low among the inferior creatures. But *these* agreeing more peculiarly to man, and so universally that he affirms, "There is no man well, and entirely in his wits that doth not worship some Deity."

Who therefore accounted it a less absurdity to admit such a thing as a rational Beast, than an

an irreligious man. Now if these have taken notice of any instances that seem'd to claim an exemption from this notion of *Man*; they have rather thought fit to let them pass as an anomalous sort of creatures, reducible to no certain rank or order in the Creation; than that any should be admitted into the account, or be acknowledged of the Society of *Men*, that were found destitute of an inclination to worship the common Author of our beings. And according to this opinion; By whatsoever steps any should advance in the denial of a Deity; they should proceed by the same, to the abandoning their own humanity; and by saying there is no God, should proclaim themselves no men.

However it discovers (which is all that is at present intended by it) the commonness, not to say absolute universality, of Religion, in the observation of these Persons, whom we must suppose no strangers to the world in their own and former times. And if it afford any less ground for such an observation in our present time, we only see as the world grows older it grows worse, and sinks into a deeper oblivion of its original, as it recedes further from it.

And (notwithstanding) this so common a consent is yet not without its weight and significance to our present purpose. If we consider

How impossible it is to give or imagine any tolerable account of its original, if we do not confess it natural, and refer it to that common

* See *Cicero* in
sundry
places.

Grotius de
veritate
Christiane
Relig.
De Pless.
same sub-
ject and
title
Calvin. In-
stit.

Episcopus
his *Instit.*
Theol. who
hath writ-
ten ner-
vously on
this sub-
ject, with
many
more.

But espe-
cially *Dr.*
Stilling-
fleet in his
Orig. Sac.

Author of all nature whom we are enquiring about: (of which so much is said by * divers others, that nothing more needs here to be said about it. 5. And at least so much is gained

by it to a Temple, that unless some very plain and ungainfayable demonstration be brought against the grounds of it (which will be time enough to consider when we see it pretended to) no opposition, fit to be regarded, can ever be made to it. That is, none at all can possibly be made; but what shall proceed from the most immodest and rash confidence, animated and born up only by a design of being most licentiously wicked, and of making the world become so. Immodest confidence it must be, for it is not a Man, or a Nation, or an Age that such have to oppose, but Mankind; upon which they shall cast, not some lighter reflection, but the vilest and most opprobrious contumely, and scorn that can be imagined. That is the imputation of so egregious folly and doatage, as all this while to have worshipped a shadow as the Author of their being; and a figment for their common parent. And this not the ruder only, and uninquisitive vulgar, but the wisest and most considering persons in all times. Surely less than clear and pregnant demonstration (at least not wild incoherent self-confounding suppositions and surmises, of which more hereafter) will ever be thought sufficient to justify the boldness of an attempt that shall carry this signification with it. And it will be a confidence equally rash as immodest

dest. For what can be the undertakers hope, either of success or reward? Do they think it an easie enterprize? and that a few quirks of malapert wit will serve the turn to baffle the Deity into nothing? and unteach the world Religion? and raze out impressions renew'd and transmitted through so many ages? and perswade the race of men to descend a peg lower, and believe they ought to live and shall die like the perishing beast. Or do they expect to find men indifferent in a matter that concerns their common Practice and Hope? and wherein their zeal hath been wont to be such as that it hath obtained to be proverbial, *to strive as for the very Altars*. And what should their reward be, when the natural tendency of their undertaking is to *exclude* themselves from the expectation of any in another world? And what will they expect in this from them whose Temples and Altars they go about to subvert? Besides, that if they be not hurried by a blind impetuous rashness, they would consider their danger, and apprehend themselves concern'd to strike very sure: For if there remain but the least possibility that the matter is otherwise, and that the being doth exist whose honour and worship they contend against, they must understand his favour to be of some concernment to them; which they take but an ill course to entitle themselves unto. Much more have they reason to be solicitous, when their horrid cause not only wants evidence; nor hath hitherto pretended to more than

than a bare possibility of truth on their side; but hath so clear (and as yet altogether unrefuted) evidence lying against it; that quite takes away that very possibility, and all ground for that miserable languishing hope, that it could ever have afforded them. Therefore is it left also wholly unimaginable, what principle can animate their design, other than a sensual humour, impatient of restraints, or of any obligation to be sober, just and honest, beyond what their own inclination, and (much mistaken) interest, or conveniency would lead them to.

By all which we have a sufficient measure of the persons from whom any opposition unto Religion can be expected, and how much their authority, their example or their scorn ought to signify with us. And that a more valuable opposition can never be made; our experience, both that hitherto it hath not been, and that it would have been if it could, might render us tolerably secure. For surely it may well be supposed, that in a world so many ages lost in wickedness, all imaginable trials would have been made to disburthen it of Religion; and somewhat that had been specious, at least, to that purpose, had been hit upon; if the matter had been any way possible. And the more wicked the world hath been, a so directly contrary, and so continually assaulted principle, not yet vanquished, appears the more plainly invincible: And that the assaults have been from the lusts of men, rather than their

their reason, shews the more evidently, that their reason hath only wanted a ground to work upon; which if it could have been found, their lusts had certainly prest it to their service in this warfare; and not have endured rather, the molestation of continual checks and rebukes from it.

Nor need we yet to let our minds hang in suspense, or be in a dubious expectation, that possibly some or other great Wit may arise that shall perform some great thing in this matter, and discover the groundlesness and folly of Religion by plain and undeniable reasons, that have not as yet been thought on: But betake our selves to a stricter and closer consideration of our own grounds, which if we can once find to be certainly true, we may be sure they are of eternal truth, and no possible contrivance or device can ever make them false.

Having therefore seen what common consent may contribute to the establishing of them jointly; we may now apply our selves to consider and search into each of them (so far as they are capable of a distinct consideration) severally and apart. Having still this mark in our eye, our own confirmation and excitation in reference to what is the proper work and business of a Temple, *Religion and conversation with God*: How little soever any endeavour in this kind may be apt to signify with the otherwise minded.

And, first for the existence of God; that we may regularly and with evidence make it out

VI.

VII.

out to our selves, that he is, or doth exist, and may withal see what the belief of his existence will contribute towards the evincing of the reasonableness of erecting a Temple to him. It is requisite that we first settle a true notion of him in our minds; or be at an agreement with our selves, what is that we mean, or would have to be signified by the name of God: otherwise we know not what we seek, nor when we have found him,

And though we must beforehand professedly avow that we take him to be such a one as we can never comprehend in our thoughts. That this knowledge is too excellent for us, or he is more excellent than that we can perfectly know him; yet it will be sufficient to guide us in our search after his existence, if we can give such a description, or assign such certain characters of his being as will severally or together distinguish him from all things else. For then we shall be able to call him by his own name, and say this is God. Whatever his being may contain more; or whatsoever other properties may belong to it beyond what we can as yet compass in our present thoughts of him.

VIII.

And such an account we shall have of what we are enquiring after; if we have the conception in our minds of *an eternal uncaused, independent, necessary Being that hath active power, life, wisdom, goodness, and whatsoever other supposable excellency, in the highest perfection originally, in and of it self.*

Such a Being we would with common consent

sent exprefs by the name of God. Even they that would profefs to deny or doubt of his exiftence, yet muft acknowledge this to be the notion of that which they deny or doubt of. Or if they fhould fay this is not it, or (which is all one) that they do not deny or doubt of the exiftence of fuch a Being as this; they on the other hand that would argue for his exiftence, may conclude the caufe is yielded them. This being that which they designed to contend for.

It muft indeed be acknowledg'd, that fome things belonging to the notion of God might have been more exprefsly named: But it was not neceffary they fhould, being fufficiently included here, as will afterwards appear. Nor perhaps fo convenient; fome things, the exprefs mention wherof is omitted, being fuch as more captious perfons might be apt to at firft to ftartle at; which yet may, poffibly as they are infinuated under other expreffions become by degrees more inclinable to receive them afterwards. And however if this be not a full and adequate notion (as who can ever tell when we have an exprefs, diftinct particular notion of God, which we are fure is adequate and full?) it may however fuffice, that it is a true one, as far as it goes, and fuch as cannot be miftaken for the notion of any thing elfe. And it will be more efpecially fufficient to our prefent purpofe; if enough be comprehended in it to recommend him to us as a fit and worthy object of Religion; and whereto a Temple

ple ought to be designed. As it will appear there is, when also we shall have added what is intended concerning his conversableness with men. The ground whereof is also in great part included in this account of him; so that the consideration of it cannot be wholly severed from that of his existence: as hath been intimated above. That is, that if such a Being exist, unto which this notion belongs; it will sufficiently appear, he is such as that he can converse with men; though it doth not thence certainly follow that he will. For it were a rash and bold adventure to say he could not be God, if he did not condescend to such terms of reconciliation and converse with apostate creatures. Whereof therefore more is to be said than the meer manifesting his existence in its own place.

And as to this, that we may proceed gradually, and in the most familiar and intelligible way that we can; we may

IX.

1. Be most assured, that there hath been somewhat or other from all eternity, or that looking backward, somewhat of real being must be confessed *eternal*. Let such, as have not been used to think of any thing more than what they could see with their eyes; and to whom reasoning only seems difficult, because they have not tried what they can do in it; but use their thoughts a little, and by moving them a few easie steps, they will soon find themselves as sure of this, as that they see or hear, or understand, or are any thing.

For

For being sure that something now is (that you see, for instance, or are something.) You must then acknowledge that certainly either something always was, and hath ever been, or been from all eternity; or else you must say, that sometime nothing was; or that all being once was not. And so, since you find that something now is, that there was a time when any thing of being did begin to be, that is, that till that time there was nothing. But now at that time somewhat first began to be. For what can be plainer than that, if all being sometime was not, and now some being is, every thing of being had a beginning? And thence it would follow that some being, *that is*, the first that ever began to be, did of it self start up out of nothing, or made it self to be, when before, nothing was.

But now do you not plainly see that it is altogether impossible any thing should do so; that is, when it was as yet nothing, and when nothing at all as yet was, that it should make it self, or come into being of it self? For sure, making it self is doing something. But can that which is nothing do any thing? unto all doing there must be some doer. Wherefore a thing must be before it can do any things; and therefore it would follow that it was before it was; or was and was not; was some thing and nothing at the same time. Yea, and it was divers from it self. For a cause must be a distinct thing from that which is caused by it. Wherefore it is most apparent that
some

some being hath ever been, or did never begin to be. Whence further,

- X. 2. It is also evident, that some being was *uncaused*, or was ever of it self, without any cause. For what never was from another had never any cause, since nothing could be its own cause. And somewhat, as appears from what hath been said, never was from another. Or it may be plainly argued thus; That either some being was uncaused, or all being was caused. But if all being were caused, then some one at least was the cause of it self: which hath been already shown impossible. Therefore the expression commonly used concerning the first Being that it was *of it self*, is only to be taken *negatively*, that is, that it was not *of another*, not *positively*, as if it did sometime *make* it self. Or, what there is positive, signified by that form of speech, is only to be taken thus, that it was a being of that nature, as that it was impossible it should ever not have been. Not that it did ever of it self step out of not being into Being: Of which more hereafter.

- XI. 3. And now it is hence further evident that some being is *independent* upon any other, that is, whereas it already appears that some being did never depend on any other, as a productive cause. Or was not beholden to any other, that it might come into Being. It is thereupon equally evident that 'tis simply independent, or cannot be beholden to any for its continued being. For what did never need a productive cause, doth as little need a sustain-

sustaining or conserving cause. And, to make this more plain, either some being is independent, or all being is dependent. But there is nothing without the compass of all being, whereon it may depend. Wherefore to say, that all being doth depend, is to say it depends on nothing, that is, that it depends not. For to depend on nothing is not to depend.

It is therefore a manifest contradiction to say that all being doth depend: against which it is no relief to say, that all beings do circularly depend on one another. For so, however the whole circle or sphere of being, should depend on nothing, or one at last depend on it self; which negatively taken, as before, is true, and the thing we contend for; that one, the common support of all the rest depends not on any thing without it self. Whence also it is plainly consequent.

That 4. Such a Being is *necessary*, or doth necessarily exist: that is, that it is of such a nature as that it could not, or cannot but be. For what is in being neither by its own choice, or any others, is necessarily. But what was not made by it self (which hath been shewn impossible that any thing should) nor by any other (as it hath been proved, something was not.) It is manifest it neither depended on its own choice, nor any others that it is. And therefore its existence is not owing to choice at all, but to the necessity of its own nature. Wherefore it is *always* by a simple, absolute, natural necessity;

XII.

D

cellity;

cessity ; being of such a nature , to which it is altogether repugnant , and impossible ever not to have been , or ever to cease from being . And now having gone thus far , and being assured that hitherto we feel the ground firm under us ; that is , having gained a full certainty that there is an eternal , uncaused , independent necessary *Being* , and therefore actually , and everlastingly existing ; we may advance one step further , and with equal assurance , add ,

XIII.

5. That this eternal , independent uncaused Being , is *self-active* , that is , (which is at present meant) not such as acts upon it self , but that hath the power of acting upon other things in and of it self , without deriving it from any other . Or at least that there is such a Being as is eternal , uncaused , &c . having the *power of action* in and of it self .

For either such a Being as hath been already evinced is of it self active or unactive , or either hath the power of action of it self or not . If we will say the latter , let it be considered what we say , and to what purpose we say it . First , we are to weigh what it is we affirm , when we speak of an eternal , uncaused , independent , necessary Being , that is of it self totally unactive , or destitute of any active power . If we will say there is some such thing , we will confess when we have called it something , it is a very silly , despicable , idle something , and a something , (if we look upon it alone) as good as nothing . For there is but little odds between

tween being nothing, and being able to do nothing. We will again confess, eternity, self-origination, independency, necessity of existence, to be very great and highly dignifying attributes; and that import a most unconceivable excellency. For what higher glory can we ascribe to any being, than to acknowledge it to have been from eternity of it self; without being beholden to any other, and to be such as that it can be, and cannot but be in the same state, self-subsisting, and self-sufficient to all eternity? And what unconceivable myriads of little senseless Deities must we upon that supposition admit (as would appear if it were fit to trouble the Reader with an explication of the nature and true notion of *matter*, which the *being* now supposed, must be found to be!) But what can our reason either direct, or endure, that we should so incongruously misplace so magnificent attributes as these? and ascribe how to express the sense intended by them in other words. And they are used without suspicion, that it can be thought they are meant to signify as if ever God gave original to himself; but in the negative sense that he never received it from any other; yea, and that he is, what is more than equivalent to his Being, self-caused, viz. a Being of himself so excellent as not to need or be capable to admit any cause. *Vid. c.4. Sect. 3.* And with the expectation of the same allowance which hath been given to *Ausdem*, or other like words. We also take it for granted (which it may suffice to hint here once for all) that when we use here the word *Self-subsistent*, it will be understood we intend by it (without Logical or Metaphysical nicety) not the meer exclusion of dependence on a subject, but on a cause.

We will acknowledge an Impropriety in this word, &c its conjugate *Self-Originate*; sometimes hereafter used, which yet is recompenced by their convenience; as they may perhaps find who shall make trial

the prime glory of the most excellent Being, unto that which is next to nothing? What might further be said to demonstrate the impossibility of a self-subsisting, and self-original, unactive being, will be here unseasonable, and *pre-occupying*. But if any in the mean time will be so fullen as to say such a thing,

Let it 2. be considered to what purpose they say it. Is it to exclude a necessary self-active being? But it can signifie nothing to that purpose. For such a Being they will be forced to acknowledge, let them do what they can (besides putting out their own eyes) notwithstanding. For why will they acknowledge any necessary Being at all, that was ever of it self? Is it not because they cannot otherwise for their hearts tell how it was ever possible that any thing at all could come into being? But finding that something is, they are compell'd to acknowledge that something hath ever been, necessarily, and of it self. No other account could be given how other things came to be. But what? doth it signifie any thing towards the giving an account of the original of all other things, to suppose only an eternal, self-subsisting, unactive Being? Did that cause other things to be? Will not their own breath choak them if they attempt to utter the self-contradicting words, *an unactive cause*, (i. e. Efficient or Author) of any thing. And do they not see they are as far from their mark, or do no more towards the assigning the original of all

all other things, by supposing an eternal, unactive Being only, than if they supposed none at all. That what can *do nothing*, can no more be the productive cause of another, than that which is *nothing*? Wherefore by the same Reason that hath constrained us to acknowledge an eternal, uncaused, independent, necessary Being, we are also unavoidably led to acknowledge this Being to be self-active, or such as hath the power of action in and of it self. Or that there is certainly such a Being, that is the cause of all the things which our sense tells us are besides existent in the world.

For what else is left us to say or think? will we think fit to say that all things we behold were as they are necessarily existent from all eternity? That were to speak against our own eyes, which continually behold the rise and fall of living things, of whatsoever sort or kind, that can come under their notice. And it were to speak against the thing it self that we say, and to say and unsay the same thing in the same breath. For all the things we behold are in some respect or other (internal, or external) continually changing, and therefore could never long be beheld as they are. And to say then, they have been continually changing from eternity, and yet have been necessarily, is unintelligible, and flat non-sense. For what is necessarily, is always the same; and what is in this or that posture necessarily (that is by an intrinsic simple and absolute necessity, which must be here meant) must be ever so. Where-

XIV.

† And whether by the way this will not afford us

fore to suppose the world in this or that state necessarily; and yet that such a state is changeable, is an impossible, and self-contradicting supposition. †

(though that be none of our present business) plain evidence that there can be no such thing as necessary alterable matter, may be examined by such as think fit to give themselves the diversion. For let it be considered, if every part and particle that makes up the matter of this universe, were it self a necessary being, and of it self from all eternity, it must have not only its simple being, but its being such or such, of it self necessarily, or rather every thing of it, or any way belonging to it, must be its very simple being it self. For whence should it receive any accession to it self when it is supposed equally independent upon its fellows, as any of them upon it? Suppose then only their various intercurrent motion among themselves, requisite to prepare them to, and unite them in the composition of particular bodies, and no other change of any other individual particle needful thereto, but only of their figure, place, and situation, till they shall come aptly to be disposed in the now attempted composition. How is even this change possible? For suppose one of these particles from eternity of such or such a figure, as triangular, hooked, &c. How can it lose any thing from it self, or suffer any alteration of its figure which essentially and necessarily belonged to it from eternity? That to which 'tis necessary to be such, 'tis impossible to it not to be such. Or suppose no alteration of figure (which *Epicurus* admits nor) were necessary; but of situation and motion till it become conveniently situate. Even this change also will be simply impossible. Because you can frame no imagination of the existence of this or that particle, but you must suppose it in some or other *ubi*, or point of space, and if it be necessarily, it is here necessarily; for what is simply no where is nothing. But if it be here necessarily (that is in this or that point of space, for in some or other it must be, and it cannot be here and there at once) it must be here eternally, and can never not be here. Therefore we can have no notion of necessary alterable or movable matter, which is not inconsistent and repugnant to it self. Therefore also motion must proceed from an immovable mover, as hath been (though upon another ground) concluded of old. But how action *ad extra* stands with the immutability of the Deity must be fetched from the consideration

deration of other perfections belonging thereto. Of which *Metaphysicians* and *Schoolmen* may be consulted, discoursing at large: See *Saarez: Leidesma de divina perfectione*, with many more at leisure. Whatsoever difficulty we may apprehend in this case. Or if we cannot so easily conceive how an eternal mind, foreseeing perfectly all futurity, together with an eternal efficacious determination of will concerning the existence of such and such things to such an instant or point of time, can suffice to their production without a super-added efflux of power at that instant: which would seem to infer somewhat of mutation; yet as the former of these cannot be demonstrated insufficient (nor shall we ever reckon our selves pinch'd in this matter till we see that plainly and fully done.) So they are very obstinately blind that cannot see upon the addition of the latter the vast difference of these two cases, *viz.* the facile silent egress of a sufficient power in pursuance to a calm, complacential, eternal purpose; for the production of this creation, by which the Agent acts not upon it self, but upon its own creature made by its own action; and the eternal blind ungovern'd action of matter upon it self, by which it is perpetually changing it self, while yet it is supposed necessarily what it was before: And how much more easily conceivable that is than this. How also liberty of action consists with necessity of existence, divers have shewn: to which purpose somewhat not inconsiderable may be seen, *Pisin. lib. 2. cap. 12. de immortal &c.* But in this there can be little pretence to imagine a difficulty. For our own being, though not simply, yet as to us is necessary, *i. e.* it is impos'd upon us; for we come not into being by our own choice; and yet are conscious to our selves of no prejudice hereby to our liberty of acting. Yea and not only doth the former consist with this latter, but is inferr'd by it. Of which see *Gibbes de libert. Dei, & creat.*

And to say any thing is changing from eternity, signifies it is always undergoing a change which is never past over, that is, that it is eternally unchang'd, and is ever the same. For the least imaginable degree of change, is some change. What is in any the least respect changed, is not in every respect the same, suppose

then any thing in this present state or posture, and that it is eternally changing in it; either a new state and posture is acquired, or not. If it be, the former was temporary, and hath an end; and therefore the just and adequate measure of it was not eternity, which hath no end; much less of the change of it, or the transition from the one state to the other. But if no new state or posture be acquired (which any the least gradual alteration would make) then it is eternally unchanged in any the least degree. Therefore eternal changing is a manifest contradiction.

But if it be said though eternity be not the measure of one change; it may be of infinite changes endlessly succeeding one another. Even this also will be found contradictory and impossible. For (not to trouble the Reader with the more intricate controversie of the possibility or impossibility of infinite or eternal succession, about which they who have a mind may consult others. *)

* *Parker*
Tent. am.
Physico.
Theolog.
Derodon.
Philos.
cont. Dr.
More's
Enchirid.
Metaphys.

If this signifie any thing to the present purpose, it must mean the infinite or eternal changes of a necessary being. And how these very terms do clash with one another, methinks any sound mind might apprehend at the first mention of them; And how manifestly repugnant the things are, may be collected from what hath been said; and especially from what was thought more fit to be annexed in the Margin.

But now since we find that the present state
of

of things is changeable, and actually changing, and that what is changable is not necessarily, and of it self.

And since it is evident that there is some necessary Being, otherwise nothing could ever have been, and that without action nothing could be from it. Since also all change imports somewhat of passion, and all passion supposes action, and all action, active power, and active power an original seat or subject, that is *self-active*, or that hath the *power of action* in and of it self. For there could be no derivation of it from that which hath it not, and no first-derivation, but from that which hath it originally of it self. And a first derivation there must be, since all things that are or ever have been furnished with it, and not of themselves must either mediately or immediately have derived it from that which had it of it self. It is therefore manifest, that there is a *necessary self-active Being*, The cause and Author of this perpetually variable state and frame of things. And hence,

6. Since we can frame no notion of *life* which *self-active power* doth not, at least, comprehend (as upon trial we shall find that we cannot) it is consequent that this Being is also *originally vital*, and *the root of all vitality*, such as hath life in or of it self, and from whence it is propagated to every other living thing. †

XV.

† Which will also prove it to be a *Spirit*; unto which order of Beings essential vitality, or that life be essential to them, seems as distinguishing a property between it and a body, as any other we can fasten upon, that is, that though a body may be truly said to live; yet it lives

trial vitality, or that life be essential to them, seems as distinguishing a property between it and a body, as any other we can fasten upon, that is, that though a body may be truly said to live; yet it

lives by a life that is accidental, and separable from it. So as that it may cease to live, and yet be a body still; whereas a Spirit lives by its own essence; so that it can no more cease to live than to be. And as, where that essence is borrowed and derived only, as 'tis with all created Spirits, so its life must needs be therewithal. So the eternal self-subsisting *Spirit*, lives necessarily, and of it self, according as, necessarily and of it self, *it is*, or *hath its being*.

Which is only annoted, with a design not to trouble this discourse with any disquisition concerning the nature and other properties of a spiritual Being. Of which enough hath been, with great evidence, said, by the incomparable Dr. *More*.

And so as we plainly see that this sensible world did sometime begin to be, 'tis also evident it took its beginning from a Being essentially vital, and active, that had it self no beginning. Nor can we make a difficulty to conclude that this Being, (which now we have shewn, is active, and all action implies some power) is

XVI.

7. Of vast and mighty *Power* (we will not say infinite, lest we should step too far at once; not minding now to discuss whether creation require infinite power) when we consider and contemplate the vastness of the work performed by it. Unto which (if we were to make our estimate by nothing else) we must, at least, judge this power to be proportionable. For when our eyes behold an effect exceeding the power of any cause which they can behold, our mind must step in and supply the defect of our feeble sense; so as to make a judgment there is a cause *we see not*, equal to this effect. As when we behold a great and magnificent fabric, and entering in we see not the master or any

any living thing (which was *Cicero's* Observation in reference to this present purpose) besides Mice or Weasles, we will not think that Mice or Weasels built it. Nor need we, in a matter so obvious, insist further. But only when our severer Reason hath made us confess, our further contemplation should make us admire a power which is at once both so apparent, and so stupendous.

Corollary. And now from what hath been hitherto discoursed, it seems a plain and necessary confectary, That this world had a cause divers from the matter whereof it is composed.

For otherwise matter that hath been more generally taken to be of it self altogether unactive, must be stated the only cause and fountain of all the action and motion that is now to be found in the whole Universe. Which is a conceit wild and absurd enough; not only as it opposes the common judgment of such as have with the greatest diligence enquired into things of this nature, But as being in it self manifestly impossible to be true.

As would easily appear if it were needful to press farther *Dr. More's* reasonings to this purpose; which he hath done sufficiently for himself.

And also that otherwise all the great and undeniable changes which continually happen in it must proceed from its own

Both in
his *Immor-*
*tal*ity of
the Soul:
and *En-*
chirid. Me-
taphys.

own constant and eternal action upon it self, while it is yet feigned to be a necessary being; with the notion whereof they are notoriously inconsistent. Which therefore we taking to be most clear, may now the more securely proceed to what follows.

C H A P. III.

Wisdom asserted to belong to this Being. The production of this world by a mighty Agent destitute of Wisdom impossible. On consideration of, 1. What would be adverse to this production. 2. What would be wanting some effects to which a designing cause will, on all hands, be confessed necessary, as having manifest characters of skill and design upon them. Absurd here to except the works of nature. Wherein at least equal characters of Wisdom and design to be seen, as in any the most confessed pieces of Art, Instanced in the frame and Motion of heavenly bodies. A mean, unphilosophical temper to be more taken with novelties than common things of greater importance. Further instance in the composition of the bodies of Animals. Two contrary causes of mens not acknowledging the Wisdom of their Maker herein. Progress is made from the consideration of the parts and frame, to powers and functions of Terrestrial Creatures. Growth, Nutrition, Propagation of kind.
Spon-

Spontaneous motion, Sensation. The pretence considered, that the bodies of Animals are machines. 1. How improbable it is. 2. How little to the purpose. The powers of the humane soul. It appears, notwithstanding them, it had a cause; By them, a wise and intelligent cause. It is not matter. That not capable of Reason. They not here reflected on who think reasonable souls made of refined matter by the Creator. Not being matter, nor arising from thence it must have a Cause that is intelligent. 9. Goodness also belonging to this Being.

I.
WE therefore add, That this being is *Wise and Intelligent* as well as powerful; upon the very view of this world it will appear so vast power was guided by equal wisdom in the framing of it; Though this is wont to be the principal labour in evincing the existence of a Deity, *viz.* the proving that this universe owes its rise to a wise and designing cause; as may be seen in *Cicero's* excellent performance in this kind, and in divers later Writers. Yet the placing so much of their endeavour herein, seems in great part to have proceeded hence, that this hath been chosen for the great medium to prove that it had a cause divers from it self. But if that once be done a shorter way, and it fully appear that this world is not it self a necessary Being, having the power of all the action and motion to be found in it, *of it self*; (which already seems

seems plain enough.) And it do most evidently thence also appear to have had a cause foreign to, or distinct from it self; though we shall not therefore the more carelessly consider this subject; yet no place of doubt seems to remain, but that this was an *Intelligent cause*, and that this world was the product of wisdom and counsel, and not of meer power alone. For what imagination can be more grossly absurd, than to suppose this orderly frame of things to have been the result of so mighty power, not accompanied or guided by wisdom and counsel? that is (as the case must now unavoidably be understood) that there is some being necessarily existent, of an essentially active nature, of unconceivably vast and mighty power and vigour, destitute of all understanding and knowledge, and consequently of any self-moderating-principle, but acting always by the necessity of its own nature, and therefore to its very uttermost, that raised up all the alterable matter of the universe (to whose nature it is plainly repugnant to be of it self, or exist necessarily) out of nothing; and by the utmost exertion of that ungovern'd power, put all the parts and particles of that matter into a wild hurry of impetuous motion, by which they have been compacted and digested into particular beings in that variety and order which we now behold. And surely to give this account of the worlds original, is, as *Cicero*, speaks, not to consider, but to cast lots what to say. And were as mad a supposition, "As if one

“one should suppose the one and twenty Letters, formed (as the same Author elsewhere speaks) in great numbers, of Gold, or what you please else, and cast of any careless fashion together; and that of these loosely shaken out upon the ground, *Ennius* his *Annals* should result, so as to be distinctly legible, as now we see them. Nay it were the supposition of a thing a thousand fold more manifestly impossible.

2. For before we consider the gross absurdity of such a supposed production, that is, that a thing should be brought to pass by so meer a casualty, that so evidently requires an exquisitely formed, and continued design, even though there were nothing positively to resist or hinder it. Let it be considered what there will be that cannot but most certainly hinder any such production. To this purpose we are to consider, That it is a vast power which so generally moves the diffused matter of the Universe.

Hereof make an estimate by considering what is requisite to the continual whirling about of such huge bulks as this whole massie globe of earth (according to some.) Or, which is much more strange, the Sun (according to others) with that unconceiveably swift motion which this supposition makes necessary, together with the other Planets, and the innumerable heavenly Bodies besides, that are subject to the laws of a continual motion. Adding hereto how mighty power it is which must be
suffi-

II.

sufficient to all the productions, motions, and actions of all other things.

Again, consider that all this motion, and motive power must have some source and fountain diverse from the dull and sluggish matter moved thereby, unto which it already hath appeared impossible it should originally and essentially belong.

Next that the mighty active being which hath been proved necessarily existent, and whereto it must first belong, if we suppose it destitute of the self-moderating principle of Wisdom and Counsel, cannot but be always exerting its motive power, invariably and to the same degree: that is, to its very utmost, and can never cease or fail to do so. For its act knows no limit but that of its power (if this can have any) and its power is essential to it, and its essence is necessary.

Further that the motion impressed upon the matter of the universe must hereupon necessarily have received a continual increase, ever since it came into being.

That supposing this motive power to have been exerted from eternity, it must have been increased long ago to an infinite excess.

That hence the coalition of the particles of matter for the forming of any thing had been altogether impossible. For let us suppose this exerted motive power to have been any instant, but barely sufficient for such a formation, because that could not be dispatcht in an instant, it would by its continual momently increase,
be

be grown so over-sufficient as in the next instant to dissipate the particles, but now beginning to unite.

At least it would be most apparent, that if ever such a frame of things as we now behold could have been produc'd; that motive power, increased to so infinite an excess, must have shattered the whole frame in pieces many an age ago; or rather never have permitted that such a thing as we call an age, could possibly have been.

Our experience gives us not to observe any so destructive or remarkable changes in the course of nature. And this (as was long ago foretold) is the great argument of the Atheistical scoffers in these latter days, *that things are as they were from the beginning of the Creation to this day*. But let it be soberly weigh'd how it is possible the general consistency which we observe things are at throughout the universe, and their steady orderly posture can stand with this momentarily increase of motion.

And that such an increase could not (upon the supposition we are now opposing) but have been, is most evident. For, not to insist that nothing of impress motion is ever lost, but only imparted to other things (which they that suppose it do not therefore suppose, as if they thought being once impress it could continue of it self, but that there is a constant equal supply from the first mover) we will admit that there is a continual decrease or loss, but never to the degree of its continual increase. For we

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see

see when we throw a stone out of our hand; whatever of the impress force it do impart to the air through which it makes its way, it yet retains apart a considerable time, that carries it all the length of its journey, and all does not vanish and die away on the sudden. Therefore when we here consider the continual momentarily renewal of the same force, always necessarily going forth from the same mighty Agent without any moderation or restraint, every following *impetus* doth so immediately overtake the former, that whatever we can suppose lost, is yet so abundantly over-supplied, that upon the whole it cannot fail to be ever growing, and to have grown to that all-destroying excess before-mentioned. Whence therefore that famed restorer, and improver of some principles of the ancient Philosophy, hath seen a necessity to acknowledge it, as a manifest thing, "That God himself is the universal and primary cause of all the motions that are in the world, who in the beginning created matter, together with motion and rest; and doth now by his ordinary concurrence only, continue so much of motion and rest in it as he first put into it.---For (saith he) we understand it as a perfection in God, not only that he is unchangeable in himself, but that he works after a most constant and unchangeable manner. So that, excepting those changes, which either evident Experience, or Divine Revelation renders certain, and which we know or believe to be without change in the

D. Cartes
Princip.
Philosoph.
part 2.

“ the Creator, we ought to suppose none in his
 “ Works, lest thereby any inconstancy should
 “ be argued in himself. Whereupon he grounds
 the laws and rules concerning motion which
 he afterwards lays down, whereof we referr’d
 to one a little above.

It is therefore evident, that as without the
 supposition of a *self-active* Being there could
 be no such thing as motion. So without the sup-
 position of an *Intelligent* Being (that is, that
 the same Being be both self-active and intelli-
 gent) there could be no regular motion, such
 as is absolutely necessary to the forming and
 continuing of any the compacted bodily sub-
 stances which our eyes behold every day: Yea,
 or of any whatsoever, suppose we their figures
 or shapes to be as rude, deformed, and useless,
 as we can imagine; much less such as the ex-
 quisite compositions, and the exact order of
 things in the Universe do evidently require, and
 discover.

And if there were no such thing carried in
 this supposition, as is positively adverse to the
 thing supposed, so as most certainly to hinder
 it (as we see plainly there is) yet the *meer want*
 of what is necessary to such a production is
 enough to render it impossible, and the sup-
 position of it absurd. For it is not only absurd
 to suppose a production, which somewhat shall
 certainly resist and hinder, but which wants a
 cause to effect it: And it is not less absurd to
 suppose it effected by a manifestly insufficient
 and unproportionable cause, than by none at all.

III.

For as nothing can be produced without a cause, so no cause can work above or beyond its own capacity, and natural aptitude. Whatsoever therefore is ascribed to any cause, above and beyond its ability, all that surplusage is ascribed to no cause at all. And so an effect, in that part at least, were supposed without a cause. And if then it follow when an effect is produced, that it had a cause; why doth it not equally follow, when an effect is produced, having manifest characters of wisdom and design upon it, that it had a wise and designing cause? If it be said, there be some fortuitous or casual (at least undesigned) productions that look like the effects of wisdom and contrivance, but indeed are not, as the Birds so orderly and seasonable making their Nests, the Bees their Comb, and the Spider its Web, which are capable of no design. That exception needs to be well proved before it be admitted; and that it be plainly demonstrated both that these creatures are not capable of design; and that there is not an universal designing cause, from whose directive as well as operative influence no imaginable effect or event can be exempted; (In which case it will no more be necessary that every creature that is observed steadily to work towards an end should it self design and know it, than that an Artificers tools should know what he is doing with them, but if they do not, 'tis plain he must.) And surely it lies upon them who so except, to prove in this case what they say, and

and not be so precarious as to beg, or think us so ealie as to grant so much, only because they have thought fit to say it, or would fain have it so. That is, that this or that strange event happened, without any designing cause.

But however I would demand of such as make this exception, whether they think there be any effect at all, to which a designing cause was necessary? or which they will judge impossible to have been otherwise produced than by the direction and contrivance of wisdom and counsel? I little doubt but there are thousands of things, laboured and wrought by the hand of man, concerning which they would presently, upon first sight, pronounce, they were the effects of skill, and not of chance: yea, if they only considered their frame and shape, though they yet understood not their use and end. They would surely think (at least) some effects or other sufficient to argue to us a designing cause. And would they but soberly consider and resolve, what characters or footsteps of wisdom, and design might be reckon'd sufficient to put us out of doubt, would they not, upon comparing, be brought to acknowledge; there are no where any, more conspicuous, and manifest; than in the things daily in view, that go ordinarily with us under the name of the works of nature? whence it is plainly consequent, that what men commonly call *universal Nature*, if they would be content no longer to lurk in the darkness of an obscure and uninterpreted word, they must

IV.

confess is nothing else but *common Providence*, that is the universal power which is every where active in the world, in conjunction with the unerring wisdom, which guides and moderates all its exertions and operations; or the wisdom which directs and governs that power. Otherwise when they see cause to acknowledge that such an exact order and disposition of parts, in very neat and elegant compositions, doth plainly argue wisdom and skill in the contrivance; only they will distinguish and say, it is so in the effects of art, but not of nature. What is this but to deny in particular what they granted in general? to make what they have said signify nothing, more than if they had said, such exquisite order of parts is the effect of wisdom, where it is the effect of wisdom, but it is not the effect of wisdom, where it is not the effect of wisdom? and to trifle instead of giving a reason why things are so and so? And whence take they their advantage for this trifling, or do hope to hide their folly in it; but that they think while what is meant by art is known, what is meant by nature cannot be known? But if it be not known, how can they tell but their distinguishing members are co-incident, and run into one? yea, and if they would allow the thing it self to speak, and the effect to confess, and dictate the name of its own cause; how plain is it that they do run into one, and that the expression imports no impropriety which we somewhere find in *Cicero*, *The art of Nature*, or rather

ther that nature is nothing else but *Divine Art*, at least in as near an analogy as there can be, between any things Divine and Humane? For, that this matter (even the thing it self, waving for the present the consideration of names) may be a little more narrowly discuss'd, and search'd into: Let some curious piece of workmanship be offered to such a Sceptick's view, the making whereof he did not see, nor of any thing like it, and we will suppose him not told that this was made by the hand of any man, nor that he hath any thing to guide his judgment about the way of its becoming what it is; but only his own view of the thing it self; and yet he shall presently without hesitation pronounce, *This was the effect of much skill*. I would here enquire *why do you so pronounce?* or what is the reason of this your judgment? surely he would not say he hath no reason at all, for this so confident, and unwavering determination. For then he would not be determined, but speak by chance, and be indifferent to say that or any thing else. Somewhat or other there must be that when he is askt, *is this the effect of skill?* shall so suddenly, and irresistibly captivate him into an assent that it is, that he cannot think otherwise. Nay, if a thousand men were askt the same question, they would as undoubtingly say the same thing? and then since there is a reason for this judgment, what can be devised to be the reason, but that there are so manifest characters and evidences of skill in the composur, as are not attributeable to

any thing else? Now here I would further demand, is there any thing in this reason yea or no? Doth it signifie any thing, or is it of any value to the purpose for which it is alledg'd? surely it is of very great, in as much as when it is considered, it leaves it not in a mans power to think any thing else; and what can be said more potently and efficaciously to demonstrate? But now if this reason signifie any thing, it signifies thus much; that where-soever there are equal characters and evidences of skill (at least where there are equal) a skilful Agent must be acknowledged. And so it will (in spite of cavil) conclude universally (and abstractly from what we can suppose distinctly signified by the terms of Art and Nature) that whatsoever effect hath such or equal characters of skill upon it, did proceed from a skilful cause. That is, that if this effect be said to be from a skilful cause, *as such*, (*viz.* as having manifest characters of skill upon it) then, *every such effect* (*viz.* that hath equally manifest characters of skill upon it) must be with equal reason concluded to be from a skilful cause.

We will acknowledge *skill to act*, and *wit to contrive*, very distinguishable things, and in reference to some works (as the making some curious automaton or self-moving Engine) are commonly lodg'd in divers subjects, that is the *contrivance* exercises the wit and invention of one, and the *making*, the manual dexterity and skill of others. But the manifest characters

sters of both will be seen in the effect. That is the curious elaborateness of each several part shews the later, and the order and dependence of parts, and their conspiracy to one common end, the former. Each betokens design (or at least the Smith or Carpenter must be understood to design his own part, that is, to do, as he was directed.) Both together do plainly bespeak an Agent that knew what he did. And that the thing was not done by chance, or was not the casual product, of only being busie at random, or making a careles stir without aiming at any thing. And this no man that is in his wits would upon sight of the whole frame, more doubt to assent unto, than that two and two make four. And he would certainly be thought mad, that should profess to think that only by some one's making a blustering stir among several small fragments of brass, iron, and wood, these parts happened to be thus curiously formed, and came together into this frame of their own accord.

Or lest this should be thought to intimate too rude a representation of their conceit, who think this world to have fallen into this frame and order wherein it is by the agitation of the moving parts or particles of matter without the direction of a wise mover; and that we may also make the case as plain as is possible to the most ordinary capacity. We will suppose (for instance) that one who had never before seen a watch, or any thing of that sort, hath now this little engine first offered to his view;
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can we doubt, but he would upon the meer sight of its figure, structure, and the very curious workmanship which we will suppose appearing in it, presently acknowledge the Artificers hand? But if he were also made to understand the use and purpose for which it serves; and it were distinctly shewn him, how each thing contributes, and all things in this little fabrick, concur to this purpose, the exact measuring and dividing of time, by minutes, hours, and months, he would certainly both confess and praise the great ingenuity of the first inventer. But now if a by-stander, beholding him in this admiration, would undertake to shew a profounder reach and strain of wit, and should say, Sir, you are mistaken concerning the compolition of this so much admired piece; it was not made or designed by the hand or skill of any one; there were only an innumerable company of little atoms, or very small bodies, much too small to be perceived by your sense, that were busily frisking and plying to and fro about the place of its nativity; and by a strange chance (or a stranger fate, and the necessary laws of that motion which they were unavoidably put into, by a certain boisterous, undesigning mover) they fell together into this small bulk, so as to compose it into this very shape and figure, and with this same number and order of parts, which you now behold. One Squadron of these busie particles (little thinking what they were about) agreeing to make up one wheel, and another,
some

some other, in that proportion which you see. Others of them also falling and becoming fixed in so happy a posture and situation as to describe the several figures by which the little moving fingers, point out the hour of the day, and day of the month. And all conspired to fall together, each into its own place, in so lucky a juncture, as that the regular motion failed not to ensue, which we see is now observed in it. What man is either so wise or so foolish (for it is hard to determine whether the excess or defect should best qualifie him to be of this faith) as to be capable of being made believe this piece of natural history? And if one should give this account of ~~the~~ production of such a trifle, would he not be thought in jest? But if he persist and solemnly profess that thus he takes it to have been, would he not be thought in good earnest mad? And let but any sober reason judge whether we have not unspeakably more manifest madness to contend against in such as suppose this world, and the bodies of living creatures to have fallen into this frame and orderly disposition of parts wherein they are, without the direction of a wise and designing cause? And whether there be not an incomparably greater number of most wild and arbitrary suppositions, in their fiction, than in this? Besides the innumerable supposed repetitions of the same strange chances all the world over; even as numberless, not only as productions, but as the changes that continually happen to all the things produced. And if
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the concourse of atoms could make this world; why not (for it is but little to mention such a thing as this) a Porch, or a Temple, or an House, or a City, (as *Tully* speaks in the before recited place) which were less operous and much more easie performances?

- V. It is not to be supposed that all should be Astronomers, Anatomists, or natural Philosophers that shall read these lines. And therefore it is intended not to insist upon particulars, and to make as little use as is possible of terms, that would only be agreeable to that supposition. But surely such general easie reflections on the frame of the universe, and the order of parts in the bodies of all sorts of living creatures, as the meanest ordinary understanding is capable of, would soon discover incomparably greater evidence of wisdom, and design in the contrivance of these, than in that of a watch or a clock. And if there were any whose understandings are but of that size and measure, as to suppose that the whole frame of the heavens serves to no other purpose than to be of some such use as that to us mortals here on earth; if they would but allow themselves leisure to think and consider, might discern the most convincing and amazing discoveries of wise contrivance and design (as well as of vastest might and power) in disposing things into so apt a subserviency to that meaner end. And that so exact a knowledge is had thereby of times and seasons, days and years, as that the simplest Idiot in a Country may be able to tell you, when the light of
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the Sun is withdrawn from his eyes, at what time it will return, and when it will look in at such a window, and when at the other. And by what degrees his days and nights shall either increase, or be diminished. And what proportion of time he shall have for his labours in this season of the year, and what in that; without the least suspicion or fear that it shall ever fall out, otherwise.

But that some in later days whose more enlarged minds have by diligent search, and artificial helps got clearer notices (even then most of the more learned of former times) concerning the true frame and vastness of the Universe, the matter, nature, and condition of the heavenly bodies, their situation, order, and laws of motion; and the great probability of their serving to nobler purposes than the greater part of learned men have ever dreamt of before; That I say any of these should have chosen it for the employment of their great intellects, to devise ways of excluding intellectual power from the contrivance of this frame of things, having so great advantages beyond the most of mankind besides, to contemplate and adore the great Author and Lord of all; is one of the greatest wonders that comes under our notice. And might tempt even a sober mind to prefer vulgar and popular ignorance before their learned philosophical deliration.

Though yet, indeed, not their Philosophy, by which they would be distinguished from the common sort, but what they have in common with

with them ought in justice to bear the blame. For it is not evident, how much soever they reckon themselves exalted above the vulgar sort; that their miserable shifting in this matter proceeds only from what is most meanly so, *i. e.* their labouring under the most vulgar and meanest diseases of the mind, disregard of what is common, and an aptness to place more in the strangeness of new, unexpected, and surprising events, than in things unspeakably more considerable, that are of every days observation? Than which nothing argues a more abject, unphilosophical temper.

For let us but suppose (what no man can pretend is more impossible, and what any man must confess is less considerable, than what our eyes daily see) that in some part of the air, near this earth, and within such limits as that the whole Scene might be conveniently beheld at one view, there should suddenly appear a little globe of pure flaming light resembling that of the Sun, and suppose it fixt as a center to another body, or moving about that other, as its centre (as this or that hypothesis best pleases us) which we could plainly perceive to be a proportionably-little earth, beautified with little Trees and Woods, flowry Fields, and flowing rivulets; with larger lakes into which these discharge themselves, And suppose we the other Planets all of proportionable bigness to the narrow limits assigned them, placed at their due distances, and playing about this supposed earth or Sun, so as to measure their shorter

shorter, and soon absolved days, months, and years, or two, twelve, or thirty years, according to their supposed lesser circuits. Would they not presently, and with great amazement, confess an intelligent contriver and maker of this whole frame, above a *Posidonius*, or any mortal? And have we not in the present frame of things, a demonstration of Wisdom and Counsel, as far exceeding that which is now supposed, as the making some toy or bauble to please a child, is less an argument of wisdom, than the contrivance of somewhat that is of apparent and universal use? Or, if we could suppose this present state of things to have but newly begun, and our selves pre-existent, so that we could take notice of the very passing of things out of horrid confusion into the comely order they are now in, would not this put the matter out of doubt? (And that this state had once a beginning needs not be proved over again.) But might, what would yesterday have been the effect of wisdom, better have been brought about by chance five or six thousand years, or any longer time ago? It speaks not want of evidence in the thing, but want of consideration, and of exercising our understandings, if what were new would not only convince but astonish, and what is old, of the same importance, doth not so much as convince.

And let them that understand any thing of the composition of an humane body (or indeed of any living creature) but bethink themselves whe-

VII.

whether there be not equal contrivance, at least, appearing in the composure of that admirable fabrick, as of any the most admired machine or engine devised and made by humane wit and skill. If we pitch upon any thing of known and common use, as suppose again a Clock or Watch, which is no sooner seen than it is acknowledg'd (as hath been said) the effect of a designing cause; will we not confess as much of the body of a man? Yea, what comparifon is there when in the structure of some one single member, as an hand, a foot, an eye, or ear, there appears, upon a diligent search, unspeakably greater curiosity, whether we consider the variety of parts, their exquisite figuration, or their apt disposition to the distinct uses and ends these members serve for, than is to be seen in any Clock or Watch? Concerning which uses of the several parts in mans body, *Galen* so largely discoursing in seventeen Books inserts on the by, this *Epiphonema*, upon the mention of one particular instance of our most wise Makers provident care; "Unto-whom (saith he) I compose these Commentaries (meaning his present work of unfolding the useful figuration of the humane body) "as certain Hymns (or Songs of praise) "esteeming true Piety more to consist in this, "that I first may know, and then declare to "others, his Wisdom, Power, Providence and "Goodness, than in sacrificing to him many "Hecatombs.---And in the ignorance whereof "there is greatest impiety, rather than in abstaining

Lib. 3.
De usu
part. ex
Lacuna.
Epit.

“abstaining from Sacrifice. Nor (as he adds in *Sub fin.*
 “the close of that excellent work) is the most *l. 17.*
 “perfect natural Artifice to be seen in man on-
 “ly, but you may find the like industrious
 “design and wisdom of the Author, in any
 “living creature which you shall please to dis-
 “sect. And by how much the less it is, so much
 “the greater admiration shall it raise in you,
 “which those Artists shew that describe some
 “great thing (contractedly) in a very small
 “space: As that person (saith he) who lately
 “engraved *Phaeton* carried, in his Chariot, with
 “his four horses, upon a little Ring. A most in-
 “credible sight! But there is nothing in mat-
 “ters of this nature, more strange than in the
 “structure of the leg of a Flea? (How much
 “more might it be said of, all its inward parts?)
 “Therefore (as he adds) “The greatest com-
 “modity of such a work, accrues not to Phy-
 “sicians, but to them who are studious of na-
 “ture, *viz.* the knowledge of our Makers per-
 “fection, and that (as he had said a little
 “above) it establishes the principle of the most
 “perfect Theology; which Theology (saith
 “he) is much more excellent than all Medi-
 “cine.

It were too great an undertaking, and be-
 yond the designed limits of this discourse
 (though it would be to excellent purpose, if it
 could be done without amusing terms, and in
 that easie, familiar way as to be capable of com-
 mon use) to pursue, and trace distinctly the
 prints and foot-steps of the admirable Wis-
 dom,

1 Cor. 6.

19.

dom, which appears in the structure and frame of this outer Temple. (For even our bodies themselves are said to be the Temples of the Holy Ghost.) And to dwell, a while, in the contemplation, and discovery of those numerous instances of most apparent, ungainfayable sagacity and providence which offer themselves to view in every part and particle of this fabrick. How most commodiously all things are ordered in it? with how strangely cautious circumspection, and foresight, not only destructive, but even (perpetually) vexatious and afflicting incongruities are avoided and provided against? To pose our selves upon the fundry obvious questions that might be put for the evincing of such provident foresight. As for instance, how comes it to pass that the several parts which we find to be double in our bodies, are not single only? is this altogether by chance? That there are two eyes, ears, nostrils, hands, feet, &c. what a miserable shiftless creature had man been, if there had only been allow'd him one foot? a seeing, hearing, talking, unmoving statue! That the hand is divided into fingers? those so conveniently situate, one in so fitly opposite a posture to the rest?

And what if some one pair or other of these parts had been universally wanting? The hands, the feet, the eyes, the ears. How great a misery had it inferr'd upon mankind? and is it only a casualty that it is not so? That the back Bone is composed of so many joynts
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(twenty four, besides those of that which is the basis and sustainer of the whole) and is not all of a piece, by which stooping, or any motion of the head or neck, differs from that of the whole body, had been altogether impossible? That there is such variety and curiosity in the ways of joyning the bones together in that and other parts of the body? That in some parts they are joyned by meer adherence of one to another, either with or without an intervening medium, and both these ways so diversly. That others are fastened together by proper joyning, so as to sute, and be accompanied with motion, either more obscure, or more manifest. And this, either by a deeper, or more superficial insertion of one bone into another, or by a mutual insertion, and that so different ways. And that all these should be so exactly accommodated to the several parts and uses to which they belong and serve. Was all this without design? who that views the curious and apt texture of the eye, can think it was not made *on purpose* to see with, † and the ear, upon the like view, for hearing? when so many things must concur that these actions might be performed by these organs, and are found to do so? Or who can think that the sundry little engines belonging to the eye were not made with design to move it upwards, downwards, to this side, or

*Bartholin.
Riolanus.*

† How foolish to think that art intended an end in making a window to see through,

and that nature intended none in making an eye to see with; as *Campanella* in that rapturous discourse of his. *Atheismus triumphatus.*

that, or whirle it about, as there should be occasion ; without which instruments, and their appendages, no such motion could have been ? who, that is not stupidly perverse, can think that the sundry inward parts (which it would require a volume distinctly to speak of, and but to mention them and their uses would too unproportionably swell this part of this Discourse) were not made, purposely, by a designing Agent, for the ends they so aptly and constantly serve for ; the want of some one among divers whereof, or but a little misplacing, or if things had been but a little otherwise than they are, had inferr'd an impossibility, that such a creature as man could have subsisted, or been propagated upon the face of the earth. As what if there had not been such a receptacle prepared as the stomach is, and so formed, and placed as it is, to receive and digest necessary nutriment ? Had not the whole frame of man besides been in vain ? Or what if the passage from it downward, had not been made somewhat, a little way, ascending, so as to detain a convenient time what is received, but that what was taken in were suddenly transmitted ? it is evident the whole structure had been ruin'd as soon as made. What (to instance in what seems so small a matter) if that little cover had been wanting at the entrance of that passage through which we breath ? (the depression whereof by the weight of what we eat or drink shuts it, and prevents meat and drink from going down that way) had not unavoidable suffocation

*Non prodest cibum
neque corpori accedit, qui
statim sumptus
emittitur.
Seneca (on
another
occasion.)*

focation ensued? And who can number the instances that might be given besides? Now when there is a concurrence of so many things absolutely necessary (concerning which the common saying is as applicable, more frequently wont to be applied to matters of morality, Goodness is from the concurrence of all causes, evil from any defect) each so aptly and opportunely serving its own proper use, and all, one common end: Certainly to say that so manifold, so regular, and stated a subserviency to that end, and the end it self were undesigned, and things casually fell out thus, is to say we know or care not what.

We will only before we close this consideration, concerning the meer frame of an humane body (which hath been so hastily and superficially proposed) offer a supposition which is no more strange (excluding the vulgar notion by which nothing is strange, but what is not common) than the thing it self as it actually is, *viz.* That the whole more external covering of the body of a man were made, instead of skin, and flesh, of some very transparent substance, flexible, but clear as very Crystal; through which and the other more inward (and as transparent) integuments or unfoldings, we could plainly perceive the situation and order of all the internal parts, and how they each of them perform their distinct offices. If we could discern the continual motion of the blood, how it is conveyed by its proper conduits from its first source and fountain,

partly downwards to the lower intrails (if rather it ascend not from thence, as at least what afterwards becomes blood doth) partly upwards, to its admirable elaboratory, the heart : where it is refined and furnished with fresh vital spirits, and so transmitted thence by the distinct vessels prepared for this purpose ; could we perceive the curious contrivance of those little doors by which it is let in and out, on this side and on that, the order and course of its circulation, its most commodious distribution, by two social channells, or conduit-pipes that every where accompany one another throughout the body. Could we discern the curious artifice of the brain its ways of purgation ; and were it possible to pry into the secret chambers & receptacles of the less or more pure spirits there ; perceive their manifold conveyances , and the rare texture of that net commonly call'd the wonderful one, Could we behold the veins, arteries, and nerves, all of them arising from their proper and distinct originals ; and their orderly dispersion for the most part by pairs and conjugations on this side and that, from the middle of the back, with the curiously wrought branches, which supposing these to appear duly diversified, as so many more dusky strokes in this transparent frame, they would be found to make throughout the whole of it, were every smaller fibre thus made at once discernable ; especially those innumerable threads into which the spinal marrow is distributed at the bottom of the back : and could we through the same medium perceive

ceive those numerous little machines made to serve unto voluntary motions (which in the whole body are computed by some to the number of four hundred and thirty, or thereabouts, or so many of them as according to the present supposition could possibly come in view) and discern their composition; their various and elegant figures, round, square, long, triangular, &c. and behold them do their offices, and see how they ply to and fro, and work in their respective places, as any motion is to be performed by them. Were all these things, I say, thus made liable to an easie and distinct view; who would not admiringly cry out, *how fearfully and wonderfully am I made?* And sure there is no man sober, who would not upon such a sight pronounce that man mad that should suppose such a production to have been a meer undesigned casualty. At least if there be any thing in the world, that may be thought to carry sufficiently convincing evidences in it of its having been made industriously, and on purpose, not by chance, would not this composition, thus offered to view, be esteemed to do so much more? Yea, and if it did only bear upon it characters equally evidential of wisdom and design, with what doth certainly so, though in the lowest degree, it were sufficient to evince our present purpose. For if one such instance as this would bring the matter no higher than to a bare equality, that would at least argue a maker of man's body, as wise, and as properly designing as the

Riolanus.

Artificer of any such slighter piece of workmanship, that may yet, certainly, be concluded the effect of skill and design. And then enough might be said from other instances to manifest him unspeakably superiour. And that the matter would be brought, at least, to an equality upon the supposition now made, there can be no doubt, if any one be judge that hath not abjur'd his understanding and his eyes together. And what then, if we lay aside that supposition (which only somewhat gratifies fancy and imagination) doth that alter the case? or is there the less of wisdom and contrivance expressed in this work of forming mans body, only for that it is not so easily and suddenly obvious to our sight? Then we might with the same reason say concerning some curious piece of carved work, that is thought fit to be kept lock'd up in a Cabinet, when we see it, that there was admirable workmanship shewn in doing it; but as soon as it is again shut up in its repository, that there was none at all. Inasmuch as we speak of the objective characters of wisdom and design that are in the thing it self (though they must some way or other come under our notice, otherwise we can be capable of arguing nothing from them, yet) since we have sufficient assurance, that there really are such characters in the structure of the body of man, as have been mentioned, and a thousand more than have been thought necessary to be mentioned here: It is plain that the greater or less facility of finding them out; so that we
be

be at a certainty that they are, (Whether by the slower and more gradual search of our own eyes ; or by relying upon the testimony of such as have purchased themselves that satisfaction, by their own labour and diligence) is meerly accidental to the thing it self we are discoursing of: And neither adds to, nor detracts from the rational evidence of the present argument. Or if it do either, the more abstruse paths of Divine Wisdom in this (as in other things) do rather recommend it the more to our adoration and reverence, than if every thing were obvious, and lay open to the first glance of a more careless eye. The things which we are sure (or may be, if we do not shut our eyes) the wise Maker of this world hath done, do sufficiently serve to assure us that he could have done this also, that is, have made every thing in the frame and shape of our bodies conspicuous in the way but now supposed, if he had thought it fit. He hath done greater things. And since he hath not thought that fit, we may be bold to say the doing of it would signifie more trifling, and less design. It gives us a more amiable and comely representation of the Being we are treating of, that his works are less for ostentation than use. And that his Wisdom and other Attributes appear in them rather to the instruction of sober, than the gratification of vain minds.

We may therefore confidently conclude that the figuration of the humane body carries with it, as manifest unquestionable evidences
of

*Parker
Tentam.
Physico-
Theolog.*

of design, as any piece of humane artifice, that most confessedly in the judgment of any man doth so. And therefore, had, as certainly, a designing cause. We may challenge the world to shew a disparity; unless it be that the advantage is unconceivably great on our side. For would not any one that hath not abandon'd at once both his reason and his modesty, be asham'd to confess and admire the skill that is shewn in making a Statue, or the picture of a man, that (as one ingeniously says) is but the shadow of his skin, and deny the wisdom that appears in the composure of his body it self, that contains so numerous and so various engines and instruments for sundry purposes in it, as that it is become an art, and a very laudable one, but to discover and find out the art and skill that is shewn in the contrivance and formation of them.

VIII.

It is in the mean time strange to consider from how different and contrary causes it proceeds, that the wise contriver of this fabrick hath not his due acknowledgments on the account of it. For with some it proceeds from their supine and drowsie ignorance, and that they little know or think what prints and foot-steps of a Deity they carry about them, in their bone and flesh, in every part and vein and limb. With others (as if too much learning had made them mad, or an excess of light had struck them into a mopith blindness) these things are so well known, and seem so common and obvious that they are the less regarded.
And

And because they can give a very punctual account that things are so, they think it, now, not worth the considering how they come to be so. They can trace all these hidden paths and footsteps, and therefore all seems very easie; and they give over wondering. As they that would detract from *Columbus's* acquist of glory by the discovery he had made of *America*; by pretending the atchievement was easie; whom he ingeniously rebuk'd, by challenging them to make an egg stand erect, alone, upon a plain table; which when none of them could do, he only by a gentle bruiling of one end of it, makes it stand on the table without other support, and then tells them this was more easie than his Voyage into *America*, now they had seen it done; before, they knew not how to go about it. Some may think the contrivance of the body of a man, or other animal, easie, now they know it; but had they been to project such a model without a pattern, or any thing leading thereto; how miserable a loss had they been at? How easie a confession had been drawn from them of the finger of God; and how silent a submission to his just triumph over their, and all humane wit! when as the most admired performances in this kind by any mortal have been only faint and infinitely distant imitations of the works of God. As is to be seen in the so much celebrated exploits of *Posidonius*, *Regiomontanus*, and others of this sort.

Arch-Bishop Abbot's Geograph.

And now if any should be either so incurably blind

IX.

blind as not to perceive, or so perversly wilful as not to acknowledge an appearance of Wisdom in the frame and figuration of the body of an animal (peculiarly of man) more than equal to what appears in any the most exquisite piece of humane artifice, and which no wit of man can ever fully imitate; although as hath been said an acknowledg'd equality would suffice to evince a wise maker thereof; yet because it is the existence of God we are now speaking of; and that it is therefore not enough to evince, but to magnifie the wisdom we would ascribe to him: we shall pass from the parts and frame to the consideration of the more principal powers and functions of terrestrial creatures; ascending from such as agree to the less perfect orders of these, to those of the more perfect, *viz.* of man himself. And surely to have been the Author of faculties that shall enable to such functions, will evidence a wisdom that defies our imitation, and will dismay the attempt of it.

We begin with that of *growth*. Many sorts of rare engines we acknowledge contrived by the wit of man, but who hath ever made one that could grow? or that had in it a self-improving power? A tree, an herb, a pile of grass may upon this account challenge all the world to make such a thing. That is to implant the power of growing into any thing to which it doth not natively belong, or to make a thing to which it doth.

By what art would they make a seed? and which

which way would they inspire it with a seminal form? And they that think this whole globe of the earth was compacted by the casual (or fatal) coalition of particles of matter, by what magick would they conjure so many to come together as should make one clod? we vainly hunt with a lingering mind after Miracles, if we did not (more vainly) mean by them nothing else but novelties, we are compass'd about with such. And the greatest miracle is, that we see them not. You with whom the daily productions of nature (as you call it) are so cheap, see if you can do the like. Try your skill upon a Rose. Yea, but you must have pre-existent matter? But can you ever prove the Maker of the world had so? or even defend the possibility of uncreated matter? And suppose they had the free grant of all the matter between the crown of their head and the Moon, could they tell what to do with it? or how to manage it, so as to make it yield them one single flower, that they might glory in as their own production?

And what mortal man that hath reason enough about him to be serious, and to think a while, would not even be amaz'd at the Miracle of *Nutrition*? or that there are things in the world capable of *nourishment*, or who would attempt an imitation here? or not despair to perform any thing like it. That is to make any nourishable thing? Are we not here infinitely out-done? Do not we see our selves compass'd about with wonders, and are we
not

not our selves such, in that we see, and are creatures from all whose parts there is a continual defluxion, and yet that receive a constant gradual supply and renovation by which they are continued in the same state! As the Bush burning, but not consumed. 'Tis ealie to give an artificial frame to a thing that shall gradually decay and wast, till it quite be gone and disappear. You can raise a structure of Snow that would soon do that. But can your manual skill compose a thing that like our bodies shall be continually melting away, and be continually repaired through so long a tract of time? Nay, but you can tell how it is done, you know in what method, and by what instruments food is received, concocted, separated, and so much as must serve for nourishment turned into chyle, and that into blood, first grosser, and then more refined, and that distributed into all parts for this purpose. Yea, and what then? therefore you are as wise as your Maker? could you have made such a thing as the stomach, a liver, an heart, a vein, an artery? or are you so very sure what the digestive quality is? or if you are, and know what things best serve to maintain, to repair, or strengthen it, who implanted that quality? both where it is so immediately useful, or in the other things you would use for the service of that? or how, if such things had not been prepared to your hand, would you have devised to perswade the particles of matter into so useful and happy a conjuncture, as that such a quality might result?

sult? or (to speak more sutablely to the most) How, if you had not been shewn the way, would you have thought it were to be done, or which way would you have gone to work, to turn meat and drink into flesh and blood?

Nor is *propagation* of their own kind by the creatures that have that faculty implanted in them, less admirable, or more possible to be imitated by any humane device. Such productions stay in their first descent. Who can by his own contrivance find out a way of making any thing that can produce another like it self. What machine did ever man invent that had this power? And the ways and means by which it is done, are such (though he that can do all things well knew how to compass his ends by them) as do exceed not our understanding only, but our wonder.

And what shall we say of *spontaneous motion* wherewith we find also creatures endowed that are so mean and despicable in our eyes (as well as our selves) that is, that so silly a thing as a fly, a gnat, &c. should have a power in it to move it self, or stop its own motion, at its own pleasure! How far have all attempted imitations in this kind fallen short of this perfection? and how much more excellent a thing is the smallest and most contemptible insect, than the most admired machine we ever heard or read of (as *Archytas Tarintinus* his Dove so anciently celebrated, or more lately *Regiomontanus* his Fly, or his Eagle, or any the like.) Not only as having this peculiar power above
any

any thing of this sort, but as having the sundry other powers besides meeting in it, whereof these are wholly destitute.

And should we go on to instance further in the several powers of sensation, both external and internal, the various instincts, appetitions, passions, sympathies, antipathies, the powers of memory, and (we might add) of speech, that we find the inferiour orders of creatures, either necessarily furnish'd with, or some of them as to this last dispos'd unto. How should we even over-do the present business? and too needlessly insult over humane wit (which we must suppose to have already yeilded the cause) in challenging it to produce and offer to view, an hearing, seeing-engine, that can imagine, talk, is capable of hunger, thirst, of desire, anger, fear, grief, &c. as its own creature, concerning which it may glory and say, I have done this?

Is it so admirable a performance, and so un-gainfayable an evidence of skill and wisdom, with much labour and long travel of mind, a busie, restless, agitation of working thoughts, the often renewal of frustrated attempts, the varying of defeated trials; this way and that, at length to hit upon, and by much pains, and with a slow gradual progress, by the use of who can tell how many sundry sorts of instruments or tools, managed by more (possibly) than a few hands, by long hewing, hammering, turning, filing, to compose one only single machine of such a frame and structure, as that
by

by the frequent re-inforcement of a skilful hand, it may be capable of some (and that, otherwise, but a very short-liv'd) motion : And is it no argument, or effect of wisdom so easily and certainly, without labour, error, or disappointment to frame both so infinite a variety of kinds, and so innumerable individuals of every such kind of living creatures, that cannot only with the greatest facility move themselves with so many sorts of motion, downwards, upwards (many of them) to, and fro, this way or that, with a progressive, or circular, a swifter or a slower motion at their own pleasure, but can also grow, propagate, see, hear, desire, joy, &c. Is this no work of wisdom, but only blind either, fate or chance? of how strangely perverse and odd a complexion is that understanding (if yet it may be called an understanding) that can make this judgment !

And they think they have found out a rare knack, and that gives a great relief to their diseased minds, who have learn'd to call the bodies of living creatures (even the humane not excepted) by way of diminution *machines* or engines too.

X.

But how little cause there is to hug or be fond of this fanie would plainly appear,

If first, we would allow our selves leasure to examine with how small pretence this appellation is so placed, and applied. And next if it be applied rightly, to how little purpose it is alledg'd, or that it signifies nothing to the exclusion of divine wisdom from the formation of them.

G

And

D. Cartes
de passioni-
bus anima.
part. 1. at-
que alibi.

And for the first, because we know not a better, let it be considered how defective and unsatisfying the account is, which the great and (justly admired) master in this faculty, gives, how divers of those things which he would have to be so, are performed only in the mechanical way.

For though his ingenuity must be acknowledged in his modest exception of some nobler operations belonging to our selves from coming under those rigid necessitating laws, yet certainly to the severe enquiry of one not partially addicted to the sentiments of so great a wit because they were his, it would appear there are great defects, and many things yet wanting, in the account which is given us of some of the meaner of those functions which he would attribute only to organiz'd matter, or (to use his own expression) to the conformation of the members of the body, and the course of the spirits excited by the heat of the heart, &c.

For howsoever accurately he describes the *instruments and the way*, his account seems very little satisfying of the *principle*, either of *spontaneous motion*, or of *sensation*.

As to the *former*, though it be very apparent that the muscles seated in that opposite posture wherein they are mostly found paired throughout the body, the nerves, and the animal spirits in the brain, and (suppose we) that *glandule* seated in the inmost parts of it, are the *instruments* of the motion of the limbs, and the whole

whole body; yet what are all these to the *prime causation* or much more, to the *spontaneity* of this motion? And whereas, with us (who are acknowledged to have such a faculty independent on the body) an *act of will* doth so manifestly contribute, so that, *when we will* our body is moved with so admirable facility, and we feel not the cumbersome weight of an arm to be lift up, or of our whole corporeal bulk to be moved this way or that, by a slower or swifter motion. Yea, and when as also, *if we will*, we can on the sudden in a very instant start up out of the most composed sedentary posture, and put our selves, upon occasion, into the most violent course of motion or action. But if we have no such will, though we have the same agile spirits about us, we find no difficulty to keep in a posture of rest; and are, for the most part, not sensible of any endeavour or urgency of those active particles, as if they were hardly to be restrained from putting us into motion; and against a reluctant act of our will, we are not moved but with great difficulty to them that will give themselves and us the trouble. This being, I say, the case with us; and it being also obvious to our observation, that it is so very much alike in these mentioned respects, with brute creatures, how unconceivable is it that the directive principle of their motions and ours should be so vastly, and altogether unlike? (whatsoever greater perfection is required with us, as to those more noble and perfect functions and operations which are

De Passion.
part. 1.
art. 8.

Princip.
Philosoph.
Dioptric.
c. 4. Di-
sertat. de
method.

found to belong to us,) That is, that *in us*, an act of will should signify so very much, and be for the most part necessary to the beginning, the continuing, the stopping, or the varying of our motions; and *in them*, nothing like it, nor any thing else, besides only that corporal principle, which he assigns as common to them and us, the continual heat in the heart (which he calls a sort of fire) nourished by the blood of the veins; the instruments of motion, already mention'd, and the various representations and impressions of external objects as there and elsewhere he expresses himself! upon which last (though much is undoubtedly to be attributed to it) that so main a stress should be laid as to the diversifying of motion seems strange; when we may observe so various motions of some silly creatures, as of a fly in our window, while we cannot perceive, and can scarce imagine any change in external objects about them: yea, a swarm of flies, so variously frisking, and plying to and fro, some this way, others that; with a thousand diversities and interferences in their motion: and some resting while things are in the same state externally to them all. So that what should cause or cease, or so strangely vary such motions, is, from thence, or any thing else he hath said, left unimaginable. As it is much more, how, in creatures of much strength, as a Bear or a Lion, a paw should be moved sometimes so gently, and sometimes with so mighty force, only by meer mechanism, without any directive principle that

that is not altogether corporal. But most of all how the strange regularity of motion in some creatures, as of the Spider in making its web, and the like should be owing to no other than such causes as he hath assigned of the motions in general of brute creatures. And what though some motions of our own seem wholly involuntary (as that of our eye-lids, in the case which he supposes) doth it therefore follow they must proceed from a principle only corporal? as if our soul had no other act belonging to it, but that of *willing*? which he doth not down-right say; but that it is its *only*, or *its chief act*; and if it be its chief act only, what hinders but that such a motion may proceed from an act that is not chief? or that it may have a power that may sometimes step forth into act (and in greater matters than that) without any formal deliberated command or direction of our will. So little reason is there to conclude that all our motions common to us with beasts, or even their motions themselves depend on nothing else than the conformation of the members, and the course which the spirits, excited by the heat of the heart, do naturally follow, in the brain, the nerves, and the muscles, after the same manner with the motion of an automaton, &c.

But as to the matter of *sensation*, his account seems much more defective and unintelligible, that is, how it should be performed (as he supposes every thing common to us with beasts may be) without a soul. For, admit that it be

De Pass.
art. 13.

As. art. 15.

(as who doubts but it is) by the instruments which he assigns, we are still to seek what is the *sentient*, or what useth these instruments, and doth *sentire*, or exercise sense by them? That is, suppose it be performed in the brain, and that (as he says) by the help of the nerves, which from thence like small strings are stretcht forth unto all the other members; suppose we have the three things to consider in the nerves which he recites; Their interiour substance, which extends it self like very slender threds from the brain to the extremities of all the other members into which they are knit. The very thin little skins which inclose these, and which being continued with those that inwrap the brain do compose the little pipes which contain these threds; and lastly, the animal spirits which are convey'd down from the brain through these pipes. Yet which of these is most subservient unto sense? That he undertakes elsewhere to declare, *viz.* that we are not to think (which we also suppose) some nerves to serve for sense, others for motion only, as some have thought, but that the inclosed spirits serve for the motion of the members, and those little threds (also inclosed) for sense. Are we yet any nearer our purpose? Do these small threds *sentire*? are these the things that ultimately receive and discern the various impressions of objects? And since they are all of one sort of substance, how comes it to pass that some of them are seeing threds, others hearing threds, others tasting, &c. Is it from the di-

vers

Princip.
Philosoph.
Sett. 189.

De Passion.
Art. 11.

Dioptr.
c. 4. § 4, 5.

vers and commodious figuration of the organs unto which these descend from the brain? But though we acknowledge and admire the curious and exquisite formation of those organs, and their most apt usefulness (as organs or instruments) to the purposes for which they are designed; yet what do they signify without a proportionably apt and able *agent* to use them, or *percipient* to entertain and judge of the several notices which by them are only transmitted from external things? That is, suppose we a drop of never so pure and transparent liquor, or let it be *three*, diversly tintured or coloured, and (lest they mingle) kept asunder by their distinct infolding coats, let these encompass one the other, and, together, compose one little shining globe: are we satisfied that now this curious pretty ball can see? nay, suppose we it never so conveniently situate, suppose we the forementioned strings fastned to it, and these, being hollow, well replenisht with as pure air, or wind, or gentle flame as you can imagine; yea, and all the before described little threds to boot, can it yet do the feat? nay, suppose we all things else to concur, that we can suppose, except a *living principle* (call that by what name you will) and is it not still as incapable of the act of seeing, as a ball of clay, or a pebble stone? or can the substance of the brain it self perform that or any other act of sense (for it is superfluous to speak distinctly of the rest) any more than the pulp of an apple, or a dish of curds? So that trace this matter whi-

whither you will within the compass of your assigned limits, and you are still at the same loss, range through the whole body and what can you find but flesh, and bones, marrow, and blood, sirings and threds, humour and vapour; and which of these is capable of sense? These are your materials and such like, order them as you will, put them into what method you can devise, and except you can make it *live*, you cannot make it so much as *feel*, much less perform all other acts of sense besides, unto which these tools alone seem as unproportionable as a plough-share to the most curious sculpture, or a pair of tongs to the most melodious musick.

But how much more unconceivable it is that the figuration and concurrence of the fore-mention'd organs can alone suffice to produce the severall passions of *love*, *fear*, *anger*, &c. whereof we find so evident indications in brute creatures, it is enough but to hint. And (but that all persons do not read the same Books) it were altogether unnecessary to have said so much; after so plain demonstration already extant that matter, howsoever modified, is incapable of sense.

In Doctor
More's
Immortali-
ty of the
Soul.

Nor would it seem necessary to attempt any thing in this kind, in particular and direct opposition to the very peculiar sentiments of this most ingenious Author (as he will undoubtedly be reckon'd in all succeeding time) who when he undertakes to shew what sense is, and how it is performed, makes it the proper business

business of the Soul, comprehends it under the name of *Cogitation*, naming himself a *thinking thing*, adds by way of question, what is that? and answers, a thing doubting, understanding, affirming, denying, willing, nilling, and also imagining, and exercising sense, says expressly it is evident to all that it is the *Soul* that exercises sense, not the body, in as direct words as the so much celebrated Poet of old. The only wonder is that under this general name of *Cogitation* he denies it unto *Brutes*; under which name he may be thought less fitly to have included it, than to have affirmed them incapable of any thing to which that name ought to be applied, as he doth not only affirm, but esteems himself by most firm reasons to have proved *.

Princip.
Phil. part.
4. 3. 189.

Medit. 3.

Dioptr.
c. 4.

* Resp.
Sexta.
Dissert.
De Method.
c. 5.

And yet that particular reason seems a great deal more pious, than it is cogent; which he gives for his chusing this particular way of differing brutes from humane creatures, viz. lest any prejudice should be done to the doctrine of the humane souls immortality: There being nothing, as he truly says, that doth more easily turn off weak minds from the path of virtue, than if they should think the souls of brutes to be of the same nature with our own; and therefore that nothing remains to be hoped or feared after this life, more by us than by flies or pismires. For, sure there were other ways of providing against that danger; besides that of denying them so much as sense (other than merely organical as he somewhere alleviates the harshness of that position, but with-

Resp. sexta.

without telling us what use's these organs) and the making them (nothing else but well formed machines.

But yet if we should admit the propriety of this appellation, and acknowledge (the thing it self intended to be signified by it) that all the powers belonging to meer brutal nature are purely mechanical and no more; To what purpose is it here alledg'd? or what can it be understood to signifie? what is lost from our cause by it? And what have Atheists whereof to glory? For was the contrivance of these machines theirs? were they the Authors of this rare invention, or of any thing like it? or can they shew any product of humane device and wit, that shall be capable of vying with the strange powers of those machines? or can they imagine what so highly exceeds all humane skill to have fallen by chance, and without any contrivance or design at all, into a frame capable of such powers and operations?

*Dissat. de
Method.
St. 3.*

If they be machines they are (as that free-spirited Author speaks) to be considered as a sort of machine made by the hand of God, which is by infinite degrees better ordered, and hath in it more admirable motions, than any that could ever have been formed by the art of man. Yea, and we might add, so little disadvantage would accrue to the present cause (what ever might to some other) by this concession, that rather (if it were not a wrong to the cause which justly disdains we should alledge

ledge any thing false or uncertain for its support) this would add much, we will not say to its victory, but to its triumph, that we did acknowledge them nothing else than meer mechanical contrivances. For, since they must certainly either be such, or have each of them a *soul* to animate and inable them to their several functions; it seems a much more easie performance, and is more conceivable, and within the nearer reach of humane apprehension that they should be furnish'd with such a one, than be made capable of so admirable operations without it; and the *former* (though it were not a surer) were a more amazing, unsearchable, and less comprehensible discovery of the most transcendent wisdom, than the *latter*.

But because whatsoever comes under the name of cogitation is assigned to some higher cause than mechanism; and that there are operations belonging to man which lay claim to a reasonable soul as the immediate principle and author of them, we have yet this further step to advance; that is to consider the most apparent evidence we have of a wise designing Agent, in the powers and nature of this more excellent, and (among things more obvious to our notice) the noblest of his productions.

And were it not for the slothful neglect of the most to study themselves; we should not here need to recount, *unto men*, the common and well-known abilities and excellencies, which peculiarly belong to their own nature;

They

XI.

They might take notice without being told, that first as to their *intellectual faculty*, they have somewhat about them that can think, understand, frame notions of things, that can rectifie or supply the false or defective representations which are made to them by their external senses, and fancies, that can conceive of things far above the reach, and sphere of sense, the moral good or evil of actions or inclinations, what there is in them of rectitude or pravity; whereby they can animadvert and cast their eye inward upon themselves. Observe the good or evil acts or inclinations, the knowledge, ignorance, dulness, vigour, tranquility, trouble, and generally, the perfections or imperfections of their own minds. That can apprehend the general natures of things, the future existence of what yet is not, with the future appearance of that to us which as yet appears not.

Hobbs's
Humane
Nature.

Of which last sort of power, the confident assertion *no man can have a conception of the future*, needs not, against our experience, make us doubt; especially being inforced by no better than that pleasant reason there subjoyned, *for, the future is not yet*; that is to say, because it is future; and so (which is all this reason amounts to) *we cannot conceive it, because we cannot*. For though our conceptions of former things guide us in forming notions of *what is future*, yet sure our conception of any thing *as future*, is much another sort of conception, from what we have of the same thing
as

as past, as appears from its different effects; for if an object be apprehended good, we conceive of it *as past* with sorrow, *as future* with hope and joy. If evil, with joy as past, with fear and sorrow, as future.

And (which above all the rest discovers and magnifies the intellectual power of the humane soul) that they can form a conception (howsoever imperfect) of this absolute perfect Being, whereof we are discoursing. Which even they that acknowledge not its existence cannot deny, except they will profess themselves blindly and at a venture to deny they know not what? or what they have not so much as thought of?

They may take notice of their power of comparing things, of discerning and making a judgment of their agreements and disagreements, their proportions and disproportions to one another. Of affirming, or denying this or that concerning such or such things; and of pronouncing with more or less confidence concerning the truth or falshood of such affirmations or negations.

And moreover of their power of arguing and inferring one thing from another, so as from one plain and evident principle to draw forth a long chain of consequences that may be discerned to be linked therewith.

They have withal to consider the *liberty* and the *large capacity* of the *humane will*; which, when it is its self, rejects the dominion of any other

other than the supreme Lord; and refuses satisfaction in any other than the supreme and most comprehensive good.

And upon, even, so hasty, and transient a view, of *a thing furnished with such powers and facultier*; we have sufficient occasion to be-think our selves; How came such a thing as this into being? whence did it spring, or to what original doth it owe it self?

More particularly we have here two things to be discoursed:

First, that *notwithstanding so high excellencies*, the *soul of man* doth yet appear to be a caused being, that sometime had a beginning.

Secondly, That by them, it is sufficiently evident that it owes it self to a wise and intelligent cause.

As to the former of these we need say the less, because that sort of Atheists with whom we have chiefly now to do, deny not humane souls to have had a beginning, as supposing them to be produced by the bodies they animate by the same generation, and that such generation did sometimes begin. That only rude and wildly moving matter was from eternity, and that by infinite alterations and commixtures in that eternity, it fell at last into this orderly frame and state wherein things now are, and became prolifick, so as to give beginning to the several
sorts

sorts of living things, which do now continue to propagate themselves. The mad folly of which random fancy we have been so largely contending against hitherto. The other sort who were for an eternal succession of generations have been sufficiently refuted by divers others, and partly by what hath been already said in this discourse; and we may further meet with them ere it be long. We in the mean time find not any professing Atheism to make humane souls as such necessary and self-original beings.

Yet it is requisite to consider not only what persons of Atheistical persuasions have said, but what also they, possibly, may say. And moreover some that have been remote from Atheism have been prone upon the contemplation of the excellencies of the humane soul to over-magnifie, yea and even no less than deifie it. 'Tis therefore needful to say somewhat in this matter. For if nothing of direct and down-right Atheism had been: The rash hyperboles (as we will charitably call them) and unwarrantable rhetorications of these latter, should they obtain to be lookt upon and received as severe and strict assertions of Truth, were equally destructive of Religion, as the other more strangely bold and avowed opposition to it.

Such, I mean, as have spoken of the *Souls* of men, as *parts of God*, one thing with him; a *particle of Divine breath*; an *extract*, or *derivation of himself*. That have not feared to apply

Sen. Ep. 92.
Hor. Sermon.
M. Anton.
Seneca
M. Anton.

The Pythagoreans concerning whom it is said they were wont to apply to them his most peculiar attributes, or say that of them which is most appropriate, and incommunicably belonging to him alone. Nay, to give them his very name, and say in plain words they were God.

admonish one another to take heed lest they should rent God in themselves. *Μη διαρῶν τὸν, ὃν ἰαυνῶν, θεόν. Jamblich. de vit. Pythag. Pla'o*, who undertakes to prove the immortality of the Soul by such arguments as if they did conclude any thing, would conclude it to be God. That it is the fountain, the principle [*πηρὶς, ἡ ἀρχή*] of motion; and adds that the principle is unbegotten, &c. in *Phædro*. Makes it the cause of all things, and the ruler of all, *De Leg. l. 10.* though his words there seem meant of the soul of the world. Concerning which soul afterwards enquiring whether all ought not to account it God? He answers, Yes certainly, except any one be come to extreme madness. And whether an identity were not imagined of our souls with that of the world, or with God is too much left in doubt; both as to him, and some of his followers. To say nothing of modern Enthusiasts.

Now it would render a Temple alike insignificant to suppose no worshipper, as to suppose none who should be worshipped. And what should be the worshipper when our souls are thought the same thing with what should be the object of our worship?

But methinks when we consider their necessitous indigent state, their wants and cravings, their pressures and groans, their grievances and complaints, we should find enough to convince us they are not the self-originate or self-sufficient being. And might even despair any thing should be plain and easie to them with whom it is a difficulty to distinguish *themselves* from God. Why are they in a state which they dis-

dislike? wherefore are they not full and satisfied? why do they with, and complain, is this God-like? But if any have a doubt hanging in their minds concerning the unity of souls with one another, or with the soul of the world, let them read what is already extant.

And supposing them thereupon, distinct Beings; there needs no more to prove them not to be necessary, independent, uncaused ones, than their subjection to so frequent changes; their ignorance, doubts, irresolution, and gradual progress to knowledge, certainty, and stability in their purposes; their very being united with these bodies in which they have been but a little while, as we all know; whereby they undergo no small change (admitting them, to have been, pre-existent) and wherein they experience so many. Yea, whether those changes import any immutation of their very essence or no; the repugnancy being so plainly manifest of the very terms, *necessary* and *changeable*. And inasmuch as it is so evident that a necessary being can receive no accession to it self; than it must always have or keep it self, after the same manner, and in the same state; that if it be necessarily *such*, or *such*, (as we cannot conceive it to be, but we must, in our own thoughts, affix to it some *determinate state* or other) it must be eternally *such*, and ever in that particular unchanged state.

Therefore be the perfection of our souls as great as our most certain knowledge of them can possibly allow us to suppose it, 'tis not yet

Dr. More's
Poem. *Autimonopsu-*
chia.
His *Im-*
mortality
of the Soul.
Mr. Bax-
ter's *Ap-*
pendix to
the Reasons
of Christi-
an Religio-
n, &c.

so great, but that we must be constrained to confess them no necessary self-originate Beings, and by consequence, dependent ones, that owe themselves to *some cause*.

XII.

Nor yet (that we may pass over to the other strangely distant extreme) is the perfection of our souls *so little*, as to require less than an intelligent cause; endow'd with the wisdom which we assert and challenge unto the truly necessary uncaused Being.

Which, because he hath no other rival or competitor for the glory of this production, than only the fortuitous jumble of the blindly moving particles of matter, our enquiry here will only be whose image the thing produced bears; or which it more resembles, stupid, senseless unactive matter (or at the best only supposed moving, though no man upon the Atheists terms, can imagine how it came to be so) or the active intelligent *Being*, whom we affirm the cause of all things, and who hath peculiarly entituled himself the *Father of Spirits*.

That is, we are to consider whether the powers and operations belonging to the *Reasonable Soul* do not plainly argue,

1. That it neither rises from nor is meer matter; whence it will be consequent it must have an efficient divers from matter?
2. That it owes it self to an intelligent efficient.

As

As to the *former*, we need not deal distinctly and severally concerning their *original* and their *nature*. For if they are not meer matter, it will be evident enough they do not arise from thence.

Só that here all will be sum'm'd up in this enquiry, whether Reason can agree to matter? We shall therefore wave the consideration of their conceits, concerning the manner of the first origination of men, as that their whole being was only a production of the earth. Whereof the Philosophical account deserves as much laughter, instead of confutation, as any the most fabulously Poetical. That is, how they were formed (as also the other animals) in certain little bags or wombs of the earth, out of which, when they grew ripe, they broke forth, * &c.

And only consider what is said of the *constitution* and *nature* of the humane soul it self, Which is said to be compos'd of very well polish'd, the *smoothest* and the *roundest* atoms; and which are of the neatest fashion, and every way, you must suppose, the best condition'd the whole Country could afford; of a more excellent make, as there is added, than those of the fire it self. And these are the things you must know, which think, study, contemplate, frame syllogisms, make Theorems, lay plots, contrive business, act the Philosopher, the Logician, the Mathematician, Statesman, and every thing else (only you may except the Priest, for of him there was no need.)

* Gassend.
Epicur.
Syntag.

As may be seen in the same Syntag. and in Epicurus's *Epist. to Herodot.* in Laert. *Εξ ατόμων αὐτῶν συγκείμεναι λογιστάων, ἢ φυσικῶν, &c.*

This therefore is our present theme, whether such things as these be capable of such, or any acts of reason yea or no?

And if such a matter may admit of serious discourse; in this way it may be convenient to proceed, *viz.* either any such small particle, or atom (for our business is not now with *Des Cartes* but *Epicurus*) alone, is rational, or a good convenient number of them assembled, and most happily *met together*. It is much to be feared the former way will not do. For we have nothing to consider in any of these atoms, in its solitary condition, besides its magnitude, its figure, and its weight, and you may add also its motion (if you could devise how it should come by it.)

And now because it is not to be thought that all atoms are rational (for then the stump of a tree, or a bundle of straw might serve to make a soul of, for ought we know, as good as the best) it is to be considered by which of those properties, an atom shall be entituled to the privilege of being rational, and the rational atoms be distinguished from the rest. Is it their peculiar magnitude or size that so far ennobles them? *Epicurus* would here have us believe that the least are the fittest for this turn. Now if you consider how little we must suppose them generally to be, according to his account of them; That is, that looking upon any of those little motes a stream whereof you may perceive when the Sun shines in at a window, and he doubts not but many Myriads of even ordi-

ordinary atoms go to the composition of any one of these scarcely discernable motes; how sportful a contemplation were it, to suppose one of those furnished with all the powers of a reasonable soul (though its likely they would not laugh at the jest that think thousands of souls might be conveniently plac'd upon the point of a needle.) And yet, which makes the matter more admirable, that very few, except they be very carefully pickt and chosen, can be found among those many myriads, but will be too big to be capable of rationality. Here sure the fate is very hard, of those that come nearest the size, but only, by a very little too much corpulency, happen to be excluded, as unworthy to be counted among the rational atoms. But sure if all sober reason be not utterly lost and squandered away among these little enticements, it must needs be judged altogether incomprehensible, why, if, upon the account of meer littleness, any atom should be capable of reason, all should not be so. (And then we could not but have a very rational world.) At least, the difference, in this point, being so very small among them; and they being all so very little, methinks they should all be capable of some reason, and have only less or more of it, according as they are bigger and less. But there is little doubt that single property, of *less magnitude*, will not be stood upon as the characteristic difference of rational and irrational Atoms; and because their more or less gravity is reckon'd necessarily (and so immediately) to

* Where yet it falls out somewhat crossly that the least (and consequently the lightest) should bethought fitter to be the matter of the rational soul, because they are aptest for motion, when yet no other cause is assigned of their motion besides their gravity, which cannot

but be more as they are bigger (for no doubt if you should try them in a pair of scales, the biggest would be found to outweigh) whence also it should seem to follow, that the heaviest having most in them of that which is the cause of motion, should be the most moveable, and so by consequence the biggest. † That they are round, oblong, oval, plain, hooked, rough, smooth, hunch-back'd, &c.

depend on that (for those Atoms cannot be thought porous, but very closely compacted each one within it self) this, it is likely, will as little be depended on *. And so their peculiar figure must be the more trusted to, as the differing thing. And because there is in this respect so great a variety among this little sort of people, or *Nation* as this Author somewhere calls them, whereof he gives so punctual an account, † as if he had been the *Generalissimo* of all their Armies, and were wont to view them at their Rendzevous, to form them into Regiments and Squadrons, and appoint them to the distinct services he found them aptest for. No doubt it was a difficulty to determine which sort of figure was to be pitcht on to make up the rational regiment. But since this power was absolute, and there was none to gain-say or contradict, the round figure was judged best, and most deserving this honour. Otherwise a reason might have been asked (and it might have been a greater difficulty to have given a good one) why some other figure might not have done as well; unless respect were had to fellow-Atoms, and that it was thought, they of this figure could better associate for the pre-

sent purpose; and that we shall consider of by and by; we now proceed on the supposition that, possibly, a single Atom by the advantage of this figure, might be judg'd capable of this high atchievement. And in that case, it would not be impertinent to enquire, whether if an Atom were perfectly round, and so, very rational; but by an unexpected misadventure, it comes to have one little corner somewhere clapt on, it be hereby quite spoil'd of its rationality? And again, whether one that comes somewhat near that figure, only it hath some little protuberancies upon it, might not by a little filing, or the friendly rubs of other Atoms become rational? And yet, now we think on't, of this improvement he leaves no hope, because he tells us, though they have parts, yet they are so solidly compacted that they are by no force capable of dissolution. And so whatever their fate is in this particular, they must abide it without expectation of change. And yet, though we cannot *really* alter it for the better with any of them, yet we may *think* as favourably of the matter as we please; and for any thing that yet appears, whatever peculiar claim the round ones lay to rationality, we may judge as well (and shall not easily be disprov'd) of any of the rest.

Upon the whole matter no one of these properties hitherto alone is likely to make a rational Atom: what they will all do meeting together may yet seem a doubt. That is, supposing we could hit upon one single Atom, that is at once

of a very little size, and consequently very light and nimble, and most perfectly and unexceptionably round (and possibly there may be found a good many such) will not this do the business? May we not now hope to have a rational sort of people among them, that is, those of the peculiar family or tribe? And yet still the matter will be found to go very hard; for if we cannot imagine or devise how any one of these properties should *contribute anything* (as upon our utmost disquisition we certainly cannot) towards the power of reasoning, it is left us altogether unimaginable how all together should make a rational Atom. There is only one relief remaining, that is, what if we add to these other properties some peculiarly-brisk sort of actual motion: For to be barely movable will not serve, inasmuch as all are so; But will not actual motion (added to its being irreprehensibly little, light, and round) especially if it be a very freakish one, and made up of many odd unexpected windings and turns effect the business? Possibly it might do something to actual reasoning, supposing the power were there before; for who can tell but the little thing was fast asleep, and by this means its power might be awaken'd into some exercise? But that it should give the power it self, is above all comprehension. And there is nothing else to give it. These that have been mentioned being all the prime qualities that are assigned to Atoms singly considered. All other that can be supposed, belonging to concrete bodies,

bodies, that are composed of many of them meeting together.

And therefore hither in the next place our enquiry must be directed, whether any number of Atoms (definite or indefinite) being in themselves severally irrational, can become rational by association, or compose and make up a rational soul?

Hitherto it must be acknowledg'd we have not fought with any adversary; not having met with any that have asserted the rationality of single corporeal Atoms; yet because we know not what time may produce, and whither the distress and exigency of a desperate cause may drive the maintainers of it; 'twas not therefore fit to say nothing to that (supposable) or possible assertion (I mean possible to be asserted, howsoever impossible it is to be true.) Nor yet could it well admit of any thing to be said to it, but in that ludicrous and sportful way. If we will suppose any to be so foolish, they are to be dealt with according to their folly.

But now as to this other conceit, that Atoms (provided they be of the right stamp or kind) may, a competent number of them, assembled together, compose a reasonable soul is an express Article of the *Epicurean* Creed. And therefore here we are to deal more cautiously; not that this is any whit a wiser fanſie than the other; but that the Truth in this matter is surer to meet with opposition in the minds of some persons already formed unto that wild apprehension and tinctur'd with it.

Where-

Wherefore such must be desired to consider in the first place, if they will be true Disciples of *Epicurus* throughout, what he affirms of all Atoms universally, *that they must be simple uncompoundd bodies (or if you will corpuscles) not capable of division or section, by no force dissoluble, and therefore immutable, or in themselves void of any mutation.*

Hereupon let it be next considered, if there were in them (those that are of the right size, shape, and weight) severally, some certain sparks or seeds of reason (that we may make the supposition as advantageous as we can) or dispositions thereto, yet how shall it be possible to them to communicate? or have that communion with one another, as *together*, to constitute an actually and completely rational, or thinking thing. If every one could bring somewhat to a common stock, that might be serviceable to that purpose; how shall each ones proportion or share be imparted? They can none of them emit any thing, there can possibly be no such thing as an effluvium from any of them, inasmuch as they are incapable of diminution; and are themselves each of them as little as the least imaginable effluvium that we would suppose to proceed from this or that particular Atom. They can at the most but touch one another, penetrate, or get into one another they cannot. Inasmuch as if any one have a treasure in it, which is in readiness for the making up an intellectual faculty or power among them, that should be common

to them all; yet each one remains so lockt up within it self, and is so reserved and incommunicative, that no other, much less the whole body of them, can be any jot the wiser. So that this is like to be a very dull assembly.

But then, if there be nothing of reason to be communicated, we are yet at a greater loss. For, if it be said having nothing else to communicate, they communicate themselves, but what is that self? is it a rational self? or is every single Atom, that enters this composition, reason? or is it a principle of reason? is it a seed? or is it a part? is it a thought? what shall we suppose? or what is there in the properties assigned to this sort of Atoms that can bespeak it any of these? And if none of these can be supposed; what doth their association signify towards ratiocination? They are little, what doth that contribute? therefore there may need the more of them to make a good large soul; but why must a little thing, devoid of reason, contribute more towards it than another somewhat bigger? They are light, doth that mend the matter? they are the sooner blown away, they can the less co-here, or keep together; they are *the more* easily capable of dissipation, *the less* of keeping their places in solemn counsel. They are round, and exactly smooth. But why do they the more conveniently associate upon that account for this purpose? They cannot therefore come so close together as they might have done, had they been of various figures. They cannot, indeed, give or receive so rude touches.

This

This signifies somewhat towards the keeping of state, but what doth it to the exercise of reason? Their being so perfectly and smoothly round makes them the more incapable of keeping a steady station, they are the more in danger of rolling away from one another, they can upon this account lay no hold of each other. Their counsels and resolves are likely to be the more lubricous, and liable to an uncertain volubility. It is not to be imagined what a collection of individuals only thus qualified can do when they are come together, an assembly thus constituted. Are we hence to expect Oracles, philosophical Determinations? Maxims of State? And since they are suppos'd to be so much alike, how are the Mathematical Atoms to be distinguished from the Moral? those from the Political? the Contemplative from the Active? or when the assembly thinks fit to entertain it self with matters of this or that kind, what must be its different compofure or posture? into what mold or figure must it cast it self for one purpose? and into what for another? It's hard to imagine that these little globular bodies, that we may well suppose to be as like as one egg can be to another, should by the meer alteration of their situation in respect of one another (and no alteration besides can be so much as imagined among them) make so great a change in the complexion of this assembly; so that now it shall be dispos'd to seriousness, and by some transposition of the spherical particles, to mirth, now to business,

finess, and by and by to pleasure : And seeing all humane souls are supposed made of the same sort of material, how are the Atoms model'd in one man, and how in another ? what Atoms are there to dispose to this sect more, and what to another ? or if a good reason can be assigned for their difference, what shall be given for their agreement ? Whence it is that there are so unquestionable common notions every where received ? why are not all things transposed in some minds, when such a posture of the Atoms as might infer it, is as supposable as any other ? Yea, and since men are found not always to be of one mind, with themselves, it is strange and incomprehensible that such a situation of these Atoms that constitute his soul should dispose him to be of one opinion, and another of another. How are they to be rang'd when for the affirmative ? how for the negative ? And yet a great deal more strange, that since their situation is so soon chang'd, and so continually changing (the very substance of the soul being supposed nothing else than a thing very like, but a little finer than a busie and continually moving flame of fire) any man should ever continue to be of the same opinion with himself one quarter of an hour together ; that all notions are not confounded and jumbled ; that the same thing is not thought and unthought, resolved and unresolved a thousand times in a day. That is, if any thing could be thought or resolved at all. Or if this were a subject capable of framing or receiving any sort of notion.

But

But still that is the greatest difficulty, how there can be such a thing as *thinking*, or *forming of notions*. The case is plain of such notions as have no relation to matter, or dependence upon external sense (as what doth that contribute to my contemplation of my own mind, and its acts and powers to my animadversion, or knowing that I think or will this or that?)

But besides, and more generally what proportion is there between a thought, and the motion of an Atom? Will we appeal to our faculties, to our reason it self? and whither else will we? Is there any cognation or kindred between the *Idea's* we have of these things, the casual agitation of a small particle of matter (be it as little or as round as we please to imagine) and an act of intellection or judgment? And what if there be divers of them together? what can they do more towards the composing an intelligent thing, than many ciphers to the *Arithmetical composition* of a number. It would be as rational to suppose an heap of dust by long lying together might at last become rational. Yes, these are things that have (some way or other) the power of motion; and what can they effect by that? they can frisk about, and ply to and fro, and interfere among themselves, and hit, and juggle and tumble over one another, and that will contribute a great deal; about as much, we may suppose, as the shaking of such dust well in a bag, by which means it might

might possibly become finer and smaller something ; and by continuing that action, at length rational !

No ; but these Atoms, of which the soul is made, have a great advantage by their being dispos'd into a so well-contriv'd and fitly-organiz'd receptacle as the body is. It is indeed true and admirable that the body is (as hath been before observed) so fitly framed for the purposes whereto the whole of it, and its several parts are designed. But how unfitly is that commodious structure of it, so much as mentioned by such as will not allow themselves to own and adore the wisdom and power of its great Architect.

And what if the composure of the body be so apt and useful, so excellent in its own kind ; Is it so in every kind, or to all imaginable purposes ? or what purpose can we possibly imagine more remote, or foreign to the composition of the body, than that the power of ratiocination should be derived thence ? It might as well be said it was so made, to whirl about the Sun, or to govern the motions of the Moon and Stars ; as to confer the power of reason, or inable the soul to think, to understand, to deliberate, to will, &c. Yea, its organs, some of them, are much more proportionable to those actions, than any of them unto these. Which though a well habited body (while the soul remains in this imprison'd state) do *less binder*, yet how doth it *help* ? and that it might perform these acts without
bodily

bodily organs, is much more apprehensible than how they can properly be said to be performed by them. And that, though they are done in the body, they would be done much better out of it.

But shall it be granted that these soul-constituting Atoms till they be (or otherwise than as they are) united with a duly organiz'd body, are utterly destitute of any reasoning or intelligent power? or are they, by themselves, apart from this grosser body irrational? If this be not granted, the thing we intend must be argued out. Either then they are, or they are not. If the latter be said, Then they have it of themselves, without dependance on the organiz'd body; and so we are fairly agreed to quit that pretence, without more ado, of their partaking reason from thence. And are only left to weigh over again what hath been already said to evince the contrary, that is, how manifestly absurd it is, to imagine that particles of matter by their peculiar size, or weight, or shape, or motion, or all of these together, and that whether single or associated, should be capable of reasoning. If the former be the thing which is resolv'd to be stuck to, that is, that they are of themselves irrational, but they become reasonable by their being united in such a prepared and organized body. This requires to be a little further considered: And to this purpose it is necessary to obviate a pittiful shift that it is possible some may think fit to use for the avoiding the force of this *dilemma*, and may
rely

rely upon as a ground why they may judge this choice the more secure ; that is, that they say they are rational by dependance on the body they animate ; because they are only found so united with one another *there* ; that *there*, they have the first coalition ; *there*, they are severed from such as serve not this turn ; *there*, they are pent in and held together as long as its due temperament lasts ; which when it fails they are dissipated, and so lose their great advantage for the acts of reason which they had in such a body. What pleasure soever this may yield, it will soon appear it does them little service.

For it only implies that they have their rationality of themselves, so be it that they were together ; and not *immediately* from the body, or any otherwise than that they are somewhat beholding to it, for a fair occasion of being together ; as if it were else an unlawful assembly ; or that they knew not otherwise how to meet and hold together. They will not say that the body gives them *being*, for they are eternal, and self-subsisting, as they will have it. Yea & of themselves (though the case be otherwise with the *Cartesian* particles) undiminishable as to their size, and, as to their figure and weight, unalterable. So that they have neither their littleness, their roundness, nor their lightness from the body, but only their *so* happy meeting. Admit this, and only *suppose* them to be met out of the body. And why may not this be thought supposable ? If they be not ra-

tional till they be met, they cannot have wit enough to scruple meeting, at least, somewhere else than in the body. And who knows but such a chance may happen; As great as this are by these persons supposed to have happened before the world could have come to this pass it is now at, who can tell but such a number of the same sort of Atoms (it being natural for things so much of a complexion and temper to associate and find out another) might ignorantly, and thinking no harm come together? And having done so, why might they not keep together? Do they need to be pent in? How are they pent in whilst in the body? If they be dispos'd, they have ways enough to get out. And if they must needs be inclin'd to scatter when the crasis of the body fails, surely a way might be found to hem them in, if that be all; at the time of expiration more tightly and closely than they could be in the body. And what reason can be devised why being become rational by their having been assembled in the body, they may not agree to hold together, and do so in spite of fate, or maugre all ordinary accidents, when they find it convenient to leave it. And then upon these no-way impossible suppositions (according to their principles, so far as can be understood, with whom we have to do) will they now be rational out of the body? Being still endowed (as they cannot but be) with the same high privileges of being little, round, and light, and being still also together; and somewhat more, it may

may be, at liberty, to roll and tumble, and mingle with one another, than in the body? If it be now affirmed they will in this case be rational, at least as long as they hold together, then we are but where we were. And this shift hath but diverted us a little, but so as it was easie to bring the matter, again, about, to the same point we were at before. Wherefore the shelter of the body being thus quite again forsaken, this poor expelled crew, of dislodging Atoms are expos'd to fight, in the open air, for their rationality, against all that was said before.

But if this refuge and sanctuary of the body be not meerly pretended to, but really and plainly trusted in and stuck to. Then are we sincerely and honestly to consider what a body so variously organiz'd can do, to make such a party of Atoms (that of themselves are not so, singly, nor together) become rational. And surely if the cause were not saved before, it is now deplorable and lost without remedy. For what do they find *here* that can thus beyond all expectation improve them to so high an excellency? Is it flesh, or bloud, or bones that puts this stamp upon them? Think, what is the substance of the nobler parts, the liver, or heart, or brain, that they should turn these, before, rational Atoms, when they fall into them, into irrational, any more than if they were well soak'd in a quagmire, or did insinuate themselves into a piece of soft dough? But *here* they meet with a benign and kindly

heat and warmth which comfortably fosters and cherishes them, till at length it hath hatched them into rational. But methinks they should be warm enough of themselves, since they are supposed so much to resemble fire. And however, wherein do we find a flame of fire more rational than a piece of ice? Yea, but here they find a due temper of moisture as well as heat. And that surely doth not signifie much; for if the common maxim be true, that the dry soul is the wisest, they might have been much wiser if they had kept themselves out of the body. And since its necessary the soul should consist of that peculiar sort of Atoms before describ'd; and the organical body (which must be said for distinction sake, the soul being all this while supposed a body also) consists of Atoms too, that are of a much courser alloy, methinks a mixture should not be necessary, but an hinderance and great debasement rather to this rational composition. Besides that it cannot be understood, if it were necessary these Atoms should receive any tincture from the body in order to their being rational, what they can receive, or how they can receive any thing. They have not pores that can admit an adventitious moisture though it were of the divinest nectar, and the body could never so plentifully furnish them with it. Wherein then lies the great advantage these Atoms have by being in the body to their commencing rational? If there be such advantage, why can it not be understood? why is it not assign-

assigned? why should we further spend our guesses what may possibly be said? But yet, may not much be attributed to the convenient and well fenced cavity of the brains receptacle, or the more secret chambers within that? where the studious Atoms may be very private and free from disturbance? Yet sure it is hard to say, why they that are wont to do it *here*, might not as well philosophize in some well-chosen cavern or hole of a Rock; nor were it impossible to provide them *there*, of as soft a bed. And yet would it not be some relief to speak of the fine slender pipes, winding to and fro, wherein they may be conveyed, so conveniently, from place to place; that if they do not fall into a reasoning humour in one place, they may in another? why what can this do? It seems somewhat like *Balaam's* project to get into a vein of incantation by changing stations. And transplace them as you will, it requires more magick than ever he was master of, to make those innocent harmless things masters of reason.

For do but consider, what if you had a large phial capable of as great a quantity as you can think needful, of very fine particles, and, replenish'd with them, closely stop't, and well luted; suppose these as pure and fit for the purpose as you can imagine, only not yet rational; will their faring to and fro through very close and stanch tubes from one such receptacle to another, make them at last become so? It seems then, do what you will with them, tofs and

tumble them hither and thither, rack them from vessel to vessel, try what methods you can devise of sublimation or improvement, every thing looks like a vain and hopeless essay. For indeed, do what you please or can think of, they are such immutable entities, you can never make them less or finer than they originally were: And rational they were not before their meeting in the body; wherefore it were a strange wonder if that should so far alter the case with them, that they should become rational by it.

XII.

And now, I must, upon the whole profess not to be well pleased with the strain of this discourse; not that I think it unsuitable to its subject (for I see not how it is fitly to be dealt with in a more serious way) but that I dislike the subject. And were it not that it is too obvious how prone the minds of some are to run themselves into any the grossest absurdities rather than admit the plain and easie sentiments of Religion: It were miserable trifling to talk at this rate, and a loss of time not to be endured. But when an unaccountable aversion to the acknowledgement and adoration of the ever-blessed Deity hurries away men, affrighted and offended at the lustre of his so manifest appearances, to take a bad, but the only, shelter the case can admit, under the wings of any the most silly foolish figment; though the ill temper and dangerous state of the *persons* is to be thought on with much pity; yet the things which they pretend being in themselves
ridiculous,

ridiculous, if we will entertain them into our thoughts at all, can not fitly be entertained but with derision. Nor doth it more unbecome a serious person to laugh at what is ridiculous, than gravely to weigh and ponder what is weighty and considerable. Provided he do not seek occasions of that former sort, on purpose to gratifie a vain humour; but only allow himself to discourse sutable to them, when they occur. And their dotage who would fain serve themselves of so wildly extravagant and impossible suppositions; for the fostering their horrid misbelief, that they have *no God to worship*, would certainly justifie as sharp ironies, as the Prophet *Elijah* bestows upon them who *worshipped Baal*, instead of the *true God*.

Nor is any thing here said intended as a reflection on such as being unfurnished with a notion of created intelligent *spirits* that might distinguish *them* from the most subtile matter, have therefore thought them capable of being involved in the same common notion therewith, thinking them material; and yet, in the mean time doubted not their immortality, much less the existence of a Deity, the Author and Former of them and all things. For they are no way guilty of that blasphemous nonsense, to make them consist of necessary self-subsistent matter, every minute particle whereof is judged eternal and immutable, and in themselves, for ought we can find asserted, destitute of reason, and which yet acquire it by no one knows what coalition, without the

XIII.

help of a wise efficient that shall direct and order it to so unimaginable an improvement. The persons do only think more refined matter *capable* of that impression and stamp; or of having such a power put into it by the Creators all-disposing hand, Wherein, to do them right, though they should impose somewhat hardly upon themselves if they will make this estimate of the *natural capacity* of matter; or if they think the acts and power of reason in man altogether unnatural to him. Yet they do in effect the more befriend the cause we are pleading for (as much as it can be befriended by a mis-apprehension; which yet is a thing of that untoward genius, and doth so ill consort with truth, that it's never admitted as a friend in any one in respect, but it repays it with a mischievous revenge in some other, as might many ways be shewn in this instance, if it were within the compass of our present design.) It being evident that if any portion of matter shall indeed be certainly found the actual subject of such powers, and to have such operations belonging to it, there is the plainer and more undeniable necessity and demonstration of his power and wisdom, who can make any thing of any thing; and who shall then have done that which is so altogether impossible, except to him to whom all things are possible. There is the more manifest need of his hand to heighten dull matter to a qualifiedness for performances so much above its nature; To make the loose and independent parts of so
fluid

fluid matter cohere and hold together, that, if it were once made capable of knowledge, and the actual subject of it; whatsoever notions were impress'd thereon, might not be in a moment confounded and lost. As indeed they could not but be if the particles of matter were the immediate seat of reason; * and so steady a hand did not hold them in a settled composure, that they be not disordered, and men have, thence, the necessity of beginning afresh to know any thing every hour of the day. Though yet it seems a great deal more reasonable to suppose the souls of men to be of a substance *in it self* more consistent; and more agreeable to our experience, who find a continual ebbing and flowing of spirits, without being sensible of any so notable and sudden changes in our knowledge, as we could not but thereupon observe in our selves, if they, or any as fluid finer matter, were the immediate subjects of it.

It is therefore however sufficiently evident, and out of question that the humane soul (be its own substance what it will) must have an efficient divers from matter, which it was our present intendment to evince. And so our way is clear to proceed to,

The second enquiry whether it be not also manifest from the powers and operations which belong to it as it is reasonable, that it must have had an *intelligent efficient*? That is since we find and are assured that there is a sort of Being in the world (yea somewhat of our selves, and that hath best right of any thing else about us
to

to be called our selves) that can think, understand, deliberate, argue, &c. And which we can most certainly assure our selves (whether it were pre-existent in any former state or no) is not an independent or uncaused Being; and hath therefore been the effect of some cause, whether it be not apparently the effect of a *wise Cause*.

And this upon supposition of what hath been before proved seems not liable to any the least rational doubt. For it is already apparent that it is not it self matter; and if it were, it is however the more apparent, that its cause is not matter. Inasmuch as if it be it self matter, its powers and operations are so much above the natural capacity of matter, as that it must have had a cause so much more noble, and of a more perfect nature than that, as to be able to raise and improve it beyond the natural capacity of matter: which it was impossible for that it self, to do. Whence it is plain, it must have a cause divers from matter.

Wherefore this its immaterial *cause* must either be wise and intelligent, or not so. But is it possible any man should ever be guilty of a greater absurdity than to acknowledge, some certain immaterial Agent destitute of Wisdom, the only cause and fountain of all that wisdom, that is, or hath ever been in the whole race of mankind. That is as much as to say that all the wisdom of mankind hath been caused without a cause. For it is the same thing after we have acknowledged any thing to be caused, to say it was

was caused by no cause, as to say it was caused by such a cause as hath nothing of that in it, whereof we find somewhat to be in the effect. Nor can it avail any thing, to speak of the disproportion or superiour excellency in some effects to their *second*, or to their only *partial* causes. As that there are sometimes learned children of unlearned parents. For who did ever, in that case, say the parents were the productive causes of that learning? or of them *as they were learned*? Sure that learning comes from some other cause. But shall it then be said the souls of men have received their being from some such immaterial Agent destitute of wisdom; and afterward their wisdom and intellectual ability came some other way; by their own observation, or by institution and precept from others? whence then came their *capacity* of observing, or of receiving such instruction? Can any thing naturally destitute even of seminal reason (as we may call it) or of any aptitude or capacity tending thereto, ever be able to make observations, or receive instructions, whereby at length it may become rational? And is not that capacity of the soul of man *a real something*? or is there no difference between being capable of reason and incapable? what then, did this *real something* proceed from nothing? or was the soul it self caused, and this its capacity uncaused? or was its cause only capable of intellectual perfection, but not actually furnished therewith? But if it were only capable, surely its advantages
for

for the actual attainment thereof have been much greater than ours. Whence it were strange if that capacity should never have come into act. And more strange that we should know or have any ground to pretend that it hath not. But that there was an actual exercise of wisdom in the production of the reasonable soul is most evident. For is it a necessary being? that we have proved it is not. It is therefore a contingent, and its being depended on a *free cause*, into whose pleasure, only, it was resolvable, that it should be or not be. And which therefore had a dominion over its own acts. If this bespeak not an intelligent Agent, what doth?

And though this might also be said concerning every thing else which is not necessarily; and so might yield a more general argument to evince a free designing cause; yet it concludes with greater evidence concerning the reasonable soul; whose powers and operations it is so manifestly impossible should have proceeded from matter. And therefore even that vain (and refuted) pretence it self, that other things might, by the necessary laws of *its* motion, become what they are, can have less place here. Whence it is more apparent that the reasonable soul must have had a free and intelligent cause that used liberty and counsel in determining that it should be, and especially that it should be such a sort of thing as we find it is. For when we see how aptly its powers and faculties serve for their proper and peculiar operations

rations, who that is not besides himself can think that such a thing was made by one that knew not what he was doing? or that such powers were not given on purpose for such operations? And what is the capacity but a power that should sometime be reduced into act, and arrive to the exercise of reason it self?

Now was it possible any thing should give that power that had it not any way? that is in the same kind, or in some more excellent and noble kind? For we contend not that this Agent whereof we speak is in the strict and proper sense *rational*, taking that term to import an ability or faculty of inferring what is less known from what is more. For we suppose all things equally known to him (which so far as is requisite to our present design that is the representing him the proper object of Religion, or of that honour which the dedication of a Temple to him imports, we may in due time come more expressly to assert.) And that the knowledge, which is, with us, the *end* of reasoning, is *in him*, in its highest perfection without being at all beholden to that *means*; that all the connexion of things with one another lie open to one comprehensive view; and are *known to be* connected; but not *because they are so*. We say, is it conceivable that mans knowing power should proceed from a cause that hath it not, in the same, or this more perfect kind? And may use those words to this purpose, not for their authority (which we expect

pect not should be *here* significant) but the convincing evidence they carry with them, *He that teacheth man knowledge, shall not be known?* That we may derive this matter to an issue, 'tis evident, the soul of man is not a necessary self-originate thing: And had therefore some cause. We find it to have knowledge, or the power of knowing belonging to it. Therefore we say, so had its cause. We rely not here upon the *credit* of vulgar maxims (whereof divers might be mentioned) but the *reason* of them; or of the thing it self we alledge. And do now speak of the *whole entire cause* of *this being*, the *humane soul*, or of whatsoever is causal of it; or of any perfection *naturally* appertaining to it. It is of an intelligent nature. Did this intelligent nature proceed from an unintelligent, as the *whole and only cause* of it? That were to speak against our own eyes, and most natural common sentiments. And were the same thing as to say that something came of nothing. For it is all one to say so, and to say that any thing communicated what it had not to communicate. Or (which is alike madly absurd) to say that the same thing was such and not such, intelligent and not intelligent, able to communicate an intelligent nature (for sure what it doth it is able to do) and not able (for it is not able to communicate what it hath not) at the same time.

It is hardly here, worth the while to spend time in countermining that contemptible Refuge (which is as incapable of offending us, as
of

of being defended) that humane souls may perhaps only have proceeded in the ordinary course of Generation from one another. For that none have ever said any thing to that purpose, deserving a confutation except that some sober and pious persons, for the avoiding of some other difficulties, have thought it more safe to assert the traduction of humane souls; who yet were far enough from imagining that they could be *total*, or *first* causes to one another: And doubted not but they had the constant necessary assistance of that same Being we are pleading for, acting in his own sphere as the first cause in all such (as well as any other) productions. Wherein they nothing oppose the main design of this discourse. And therefore it is not in our way to offer at any opposition unto them.

But if any have a mind to indulge themselves the liberty of so much dotage as to say the souls of men were *first* and *only* causes to one another. Either they must suppose them to be *material* beings. And then we refer them to what hath been already said, shewing that their powers and operations cannot belong to matter, nor arise from it. Or *immaterial*, and then, they cannot produce one another in the way of generation. For of what pre-existent substance are they made? *Theirs* who beget them? of that they can part with nothing, separability, at least, of parts being a most confessed property of matter. Or *some other*? where will they find that other spiritual substance,

substance, that belong'd not inseparably to some individual being before. And besides, if it were pre-existent, as it must be if a soul be generated out of it, then they were not the first and only causes of this production.

And in another way than that of generation, how will any go about to make a soul? Let experience and the making of trial convince the undertakers. By what power, or by what art will they make a reasonable soul spring up out of nothing?

It might be hoped that *thus*, without disputing the possibility of an eternal successive production of souls, this shift may appear vain. But if any will persist and say that how or in what way soever they are produc'd; 'Tis strange if they need any nobler cause than themselves; for may not any living thing well enough be thought capable of producing another of the same kind? or no more than equal perfection with it self? To this we say, besides that no one living thing is the only cause of another such. Yet if that were admitted possible what will it avail? For hath every soul that hath ever existed or been *in being* been produced in this way by another? This it were ridiculous to say; for if every one were so produced, there was then some one before every one. Inasmuch as that which produces must surely have been before that which is produced by it. But how can every one have one before it? A manifest contradiction in the very terms! For then there will be one with-

without the compass of *every one*, And how is it then said to be *every one*? There is then it seems one, besides or more than *all*. And so *all* is not *all*. And if this be thought a sophism, let the matter be soberly considered thus. The soul of man is either a thing of that nature universally (and consequently every individual soul) as that it doth exist of it self necessarily and independently, or not? If it be. Then we have however a wise intelligent *being* necessarily existing. The thing we have been proving all this while. Yet this concession we will not accept, for though it is most certain there is such a *being*, we have also proved the humane soul is not *it*. Whence it is evidently a dependent being in its own nature that could never have been of it self, had it not been put into being by somewhat else. And being so in its own nature, it must be thus with every one that partakes of this nature. And consequently it must be somewhat of another nature that did put the souls of men into being. Otherwise the whole stock and lineage of humane souls is said to have been dependent on a productive cause, and yet had nothing whereon to depend, And so is both caused by another, and not caused. And therefore since it is hereby evident it was somewhat else, and of another nature; than an humane soul by which all humane souls were produced into being. We again say, that distinct Being either was a dependent caused Being, or not. If not, it being proved that the soul of man cannot but have had an intelli-

gent or wise cause, we have now what we seek. An independent necessary intelligent Being. If it do depend, or any will be so idle to say so. That however will infallibly and very speedily lead us to the same mark. For though some have been pleased to dream of an infinite succession of *individuals* of this or that kind; I suppose we have no dream as yet ready formed to come under confutation of *infinite kinds* or orders of beings gradually superiour, one above another; the inferiour still depending on the superiour, and all upon nothing.

And therefore I conceive we may fairly take leave of this argument from the humane soul, as having gained from it sufficient evidence of the existence of a necessary Being that is intelligent and designingly active, being guided by wisdom and counsel in what it doth.

We might also, if it were needful further argue the same thing from a power or ability manifestly superiour to, and that exceeds the utmost perfection of *humane nature*, viz. that of Prophesie, or the prediction of future contingencies; yea, and from *another* that exceeds the whole sphere of all *created nature*, and which crosses and countermands the known and stated laws thereof, viz. that of working miracles; both of them exercised with manifest design; as might evidently be made appear, by manifold instances, to as many, as can believe any thing to be true; more than what they have seen with their own eyes. And that do not take present sense (yea and their own only)

only) to be the alone measure of all reality. But it is not necessary we insist upon every thing that may be said ; so that enough be said to serve our present purpose.

And that our purpose may yet be more fully served ; and such a Being evidenced to exist as we may with satisfaction esteem to merit a Temple with us, and the Religion of it ; it is necessary that we add somewhat concerning

XV.

9. The Divine *Goodness* ; for unto that eternal *Being*, whose existence we have hitherto asserted, Goodness also cannot but appertain together with those his other Attributes we have spoken of.

It is not needful here to be curious about the usual scholastical notions of Goodness, or what it imports, as it is wont to be attributed to *Being* in the general, what, as it belongs, in a peculiar sense, to intellectual Beings, or what more special import it may have in reference to *this*.

That which we at present chiefly intend by it is a *propension to do good with delight* ; or *most freely* without other inducement, than the agreeableness of it to his nature who doth it ; and a certain delectation and complacency, which, hence, is taken in so doing. The name of *Goodness* (though *thus* it more peculiarly signify the particular virtue of liberality) is of a significancy large enough, even in the *moral acceptation*, to comprehend all other perfections or virtues, that belong to, or may any way commend the will of a free Agent. These

therefore we exclude not ; and particularly whatsoever is wont to be signified (as attributable unto God) by the names of *Holiness* [as a steady inclination unto what is intellectually pure, and comely, with an averſion to the contrary] *Justice* as that ſignifies [an inclination to deal equally] which is included in the former, yet as *more expreſſly* denoting what is more proper to a Governour over others, viz. [a reſolution not to let the tranſgreſſion of laws made for the preſervation of common order, paſs without due animadverſion and puniſhment:] *Truth*, whoſe ſignification alſo may be wholly contained under thoſe former more general terms, but more directly contains [ſincerity, unaptness to deceive, and conſtancy to ones word.] For theſe may properly be ſtiled *good things* in a *moral ſenſe*. As many other things might in another notion of goodneſs, which it belongs not to our preſent deſign to make mention of. But theſe are mentioned as more directly tending to repreſent to us an *amiable object of Religion*. And are referr'd hither, as they fitly enough may, out of an unwillingneſs to multiply without neceſſity, particular heads or ſubjects of diſcourſe.

In the mean time, as was ſaid, what we principally intend, is, That the *Being* whoſe exiſtence we have been endeavouring to evince is *good*, as that imports a ready inclination of will to communicate unto others what may be good to them ; creating firſt its own object, and then iſſuing forth to it in acts of free beneficence,

nescience, suitable to the nature of every thing created by it. Which though it be the primary or first thing carried in the notion of this goodness. Yet because that *inclination* is not otherwise good, than as it consists with holiness, justice and Truth; These therefore may be esteemed secondarily, at least, to belong to it, as inseparable qualifications thereof.

Wherefore it is not a merely natural, and necessary emanation we here intend, that prevents any act or exercise of counsel or design; which would no way consist with the liberty of the Divine will: And would make the Deity as well a *necessary Agent*, as a *necessary Being*; Yea, and would therefore make all the creatures merely natural and necessary emanations; and so destroy the distinction of necessary and contingent Beings. And, by consequence, bid fair to the making all things God. It would infer not only the eternity of the world, but would seem to infer either the absolute infinity of it, or the perfection of it, and of every creature in it, to that degree, as that nothing could be more perfect in its own kind than it is; or would infer the finiteness of the Divine Being. For it would make *what he hath done* the adequate measure of *what he can do*. And would make all his administrations necessary, yea, and all the actions of men, and consequently take away all Law and Government out of the world, and all measures of right and wrong, and make all punitive justice barbarous cruelty. And consequently give us a notion of good-

ness at length plainly inconsistent with it self.

All this is provided against by our having first asserted the *Wisdom* of that *Being*, whereunto we also attribute *goodness*. Which guides all the issues of it according to those measures or rules which the essential rectitude of the Divine will gives, or rather is, unto it. Whereby also a foundation is laid of answering such cavils against the Divine Goodness, as they are apt to raise to themselves, who are wont to magnifie this attribute to the suppression of others. Which is indeed, in the end, to magnifie it to *nothing*.

And such goodness needs no other demonstration than the visible instances and effects we have of it, in the creation and conservation of this world; and particularly, in his large munificent bounty and kindness towards man, whereof his designing him for his Temple, and residence, will be a full and manifest proof.

And of all this, his own self-sufficient fullness leaves it impossible to us to imagine another reason, than the delight he takes in dispensing his own free and large communications. Besides, that when we see some resemblances and imitations of this goodness, in the natures of some men, which we are sure are not nothing, they must needs proceed from something, and have some fountain and original, which can be no other than the common cause and Author of all things. In whom, therefore, this goodness doth firstly and most perfectly reside.

CHAP.

C H A P. IV.

Generally all supposable perfection, asserted of this Being, where, First, a Being absolutely perfect, is endeavoured to be evinced from the (already proved) necessary Being. Which is shewn to import, in the general, The utmost fulness of Being. Also divers things, in particular that tend to evince that general. As that it is, at the remotest distance from no Being. Most purely actual. Most abstracted Being. The productive and conserving cause of all things else. Undiminishable. Uncapable of addition. Secondly, hence is more expressly deduced the infiniteness of this Being. An enquiry whether it be possible the Creature can be actually infinite? Difficulties concerning the absolute fulness, and. Infiniteness of God considered. 2. The onliness of his Being. The Trinity not thereby excluded.

I. Some account hath been thus far given of that Being, whereunto we have been designing to assert the honour of a Temple. Each of the particulars having been severally insisted on, that concur to make up that notion of this Being, which was at first laid down. And more largely, what hath been more oppos'd, by persons of an atheistical or irreligious temper. But, because in that forementioned account of God, there was added to the particu-

lars there enumerated (out of a just consciousness of humane inability to comprehend every thing that may possibly belong to him) this general suppliment.

[*That all other supposable excellencies whatsoever do in the biggest perfection appertain also originally, unto this Being*] It is requisite that somewhat be said concerning this addition. Especially in as much as it comprehends in it, or may infer, somethings (not yet expressly mentioned) which may be thought necessary to the evincing the reasonableness of Religion, or our self-dedication as a Temple to him.

For instance, it may possibly be alledged, that, if it were admitted there is somewhat that is eternal, uncaused, independent, necessarily existent, that is self-active, living, powerful, wise, and good. Yet all this will not infer upon us an universal obligation to Religion, unless it can also be evinced.

1. That this Being is every way *sufficient* to supply and satistie all our real wants and just desires.
2. And that this Being is *but one*, and so that all be at a certainty where their Religion ought to terminate. And that the worship of every Temple must concenter and meet in the same object.

Now the eviction of an *absolutely perfect Being* would include each of these; and answer both the purposes which may seem hitherto not so fully satistied. It is therefore requisite that we endeavour

First,

First, to shew that the Being hitherto described is *absolutely or every way perfect*.

Secondly, To deduce, from the same grounds, the absolute *infinity*, and the *unity* (or the oneness) thereof.

II.

And for the former part of this undertaking, It must be acknowledged *absolute or universal perfection*, cannot be pretended to have been express'd in any or in all the works of God together. Neither *in number*, for ought we know (for as we cannot conceive, nor consequently speak of Divine perfections, but under the notion of *many*, whatsoever their real identity may be, so we do not know, but that within the compass of universal perfection, there may be some particular ones of which there is no footstep in the creation, and whereof we have never formed any thought.) Nor (more certainly) *in degree*; For surely the world, and the particular creatures in it, are not so perfect in correspondence to those attributes of its great Architect which we have mentioned, *viz.* his Power, Wisdom, and Goodness, as he might have made them, if he had pleased. And indeed, to say the world were absolutely and universally perfect, were to make *that* God.

Wherefore it must also be acknowledged that an *absolutely perfect Being* cannot be *immediately* demonstrated from its effects, as whereto they neither *do*, nor is it within the capacity of created nature that they *can*, adequately, correspond. Whence therefore, all that

that can be done for the evincing of the *absolute and universal perfection* of God, must be in some other way or method of discourse.

And though it be acknowledged that it cannot be *immediately* evidenced from the Creation, yet it is to be hoped that *mediately* it may. For from thence (as we have seen) a necessary self-originate Being, such as hath been described, is with the greatest certainty to be concluded; and, from thence, if we attentively consider, we shall be led to an absolutely perfect one. That is, since we have the same certainty of such a *necessary self-originate Being* as we have that there is any thing existent at all. If we seriously weigh what kind of Being this must needs be, or what its notion must import, above what hath been already evinced: We shall not be found, in this way, much to fall short of our present aim (though we have also other evidence that may be produced in its own fitter place.)

Here therefore let us a while make a stand, and more distinctly consider how far we are already advanced, that we may, with the better order and advantage, make our further progress.

These two things then are already evident. [First, That there is a necessary Being that hath been eternally of it self, without dependence upon any thing, either as a productive or conserving cause. And of it self full of activity and vital energy, so as to be a productive and sustaining cause to other things.]

Of

Of this any the most confused and indistinct view of this world, or a meer taking notice, that there is any thing in Being, that lives and moves, and withal that alters and changes, (which it is impossible the necessary Being it self should do) cannot but put us out of doubt.

Secondly,] That this necessary self-originate, vital, active Being hath very vast Power, admirable Wisdom, and most free and large goodness belonging to it.] And of this, our nearer and more deliberate view and contemplation of the world do equally ascertain us. For of these things we find the manifest prints and footsteps in it. Yea, we find the (derived) things themselves [*Power, Wisdom, Goodness.*] in the creatures. And we are most assured they have not sprung from nothing; nor from any thing that had them not. And that which originally had them, or was their first fountain must have them necessarily, and essentially (together with whatsoever else belongs to its Being) in and of it self. So that the asserting of any other necessary being that is in it self destitute of these things, signifies no more towards the giving any account how these things came to be in the world, than if no Being, necessarily existing, were asserted at all. We are therefore, by the exigency of the case it self, constrained to acknowledge, not only that there is a necessary Being, but that there is such a one, as could be, and was the fountain and cause of all those several kinds and degrees
of

of being and perfection that we take notice of in the world besides. Another sort of necessary Being should not only be asserted to no purpose, there being nothing to be gained by it, no imaginable use to be made of it, as a principle that can serve any valuable end. (For suppose such a thing as necessary matter, it will as hath been shewn be unalterable; and therefore another sort of matter must be supposed besides it, that may be the matter of the universe, raised up out of nothing for that purpose, unto which this so unwieldy and unmanagable an entity can never serve.) But also it will be impossible to be proved. No man can be taken with any plausible shew of reason to make it out. Yea, and much may be said (I conceive with convincing evidence) against it. As may perhaps be seen in the sequel of this discourse.

In the mean time, that there is, however, a necessary Being, unto which all the perfections, whereof we have any foot-steps or resemblances in the Creation, do originally and essentially belong, is undeniably evident.

Now, that we may proceed, what can self-essentiate, underived, Power, Wisdom, Goodness be, but most perfect Power, Wisdom, Goodness? Or such as than which there can never be more perfect?

For, since there can be no Wisdom, Power, or Goodness, which is not either original and self-essentiate, or derived and participated from thence? Who sees not that the former must

must be the more perfect. Yea; and that it comprehended all the other (as what was from it) in it self. And consequently that it is simply the most perfect? And the reason will be the same, concerning any other perfection, the stamps and characters whereof we find signed upon the creatures.]

But that the Being unto which these belong is absolutely and universally perfect in every kind, must be further evidenced by considering more at large the notion and import of such a self-originate necessary Being.

Some indeed, both more anciently, * and of * So that late have inverted this course; and from the whatever there is of supposition of *absolute perfection* have gone strength in that about to infer *necessity of existence*, as being contained in the *Idæa* of the former. But of this way of arguing, the latter we are otherwise assured, upon clearer glory of it and less exceptionable terms. And being so, cannot be are to consider what improvement may be made of it to our present purpose. without injury appropriated

to the present age, much less to any particular person therein: It having, since *Anselm*, been ventilated by divers others heretofore *D. Scot. Dist. 2. Q. 2. To Aquin. P. 1. Q. 2. art 1. contra Gentil. l. 1. c. 10. Bradwarden, l. 1. c. 1.* And by divers of late, as is sufficiently known, some rejecting, others much confiding in it, both of these former, and of modern Writers.)

And in the general, this seems manifestly imported in the notion of *the necessary Being* we have already evinced, *that it have in it* (some way or other, in what way there will be occasion to consider hereafter) the *entire sum* and

and utmost fulness of Being, beyond which or without the compass whereof, no perfection is conceivable, or indeed (which is of the same import) *nothing*.

Let it be observed that we pretend not to argue this from the bare terms *necessary Being*, only, but from hence, *that it is such*, as we have found it. Though indeed, these very terms import not a little to this purpose. For that which *is necessarily*, of it self, without being beholden to *anything*, seems as good as *all things*, and to contain in it self an immense fulness; being indigent of nothing. Nor by indigence is here meant *cravingness*, or a *sense of want* only, in opposition whereto, every good and virtuous man hath or may attain, a sort of *divine* or self-fulness and *be satisfied from himself* (which yet is a stamp of Divinity, and a part of the image of God, or such a participation of the Divine Nature, as is agreeable to the state and condition of a creature,) But we understand by it (what is naturally before that) *want it self* really, and not in opinion (as the covetous is said to be poor.) On the other hand we here intend not a merely rational (much less an imaginary) but a real self-fulness. And so we say, what is of that nature, that it is, and subsists wholly, and only of it self, without depending on any other, must owe this absoluteness, to so peculiar an excellency of its own nature, as we cannot well conceive to be less, than whereby it comprehends in it self, the most boundless and unlimited ful-

fulness of Being, life, power, or whatsoever can be conceived under the name of a perfection. For taking notice of the existence of any thing whatsoever, some reason must be assignable, whence it is that this particular Being doth exist? and hath such and such powers and properties belonging to it, as do occur to our notice therein? when we can now resolve its existence into some cause, that put it into Being, and made it what it is; we cease so much to admire the thing, how excellent soever it be, and turn our admiration upon its cause, concluding *that* to have all the perfection in it which we discern in the effect, whatsoever unknown perfection (which we may suppose is very great) it may have besides. And upon this ground we are led, when we behold the manifold excellencies that lie dispers'd among particular Beings, in this universe, with the glory of the whole, resulting thence, to resolve their existence into a common cause, which we design by the name of *God*. And now considering him as a wise Agent, (which hath been proved) and consequently a *free* one, that acted not from any necessity of nature, but his meer good pleasure herein, we will not only conclude him to have all that perfection and excellency in him, which we find him to have display'd in so vast and glorious a work; but will readily believe him (supposing we have admitted a conviction concerning what hath been discoursed before) to have a most unconceivable treasure of hidden excellency and per-

perfection in him, that is not represented to our view in this work of his. And account, that, he who could do all this which we see is done, could do unspeakably more. For though, speaking of natural and necessitated Agents, which always act to their uttermost, it would be absurd to argue from their having done some lesser thing, to their power of doing somewhat that is much greater. Yet as to free Agents, that can choose their own act, and guide themselves by wisdom and judgment therein, the matter is not so: As when some great Prince bestows a rich largess upon some mean person, especially that deserved nothing from him, or was recommended by nothing to his royal favour, besides his poverty and misery; we justly take it for a very significant demonstration of that princely munificence, and bounty, which would encline him to do much greater things, when he should see a *proportionable* cause.

But now, if taking notice of the excellencies that appear in caused Beings, and enquiring how they come to exist and be what they are, we resolve all into their cause; which, considering as perfectly free and arbitrary in all his communications; We do thence rationally conclude, that if he had thought fit, he could have made a much more pompous display of himself; and that there is in him, besides what appears, a vast and most abundant store of undiscovered perfection.

When

When next, we turn our enquiry and contemplation, more entirely, upon the cause. And berthink our selves: But how came he to exist and be what he is? Finding this cannot be refunded upon any superiour cause; And our utmost enquiry can admit of no other result, but this, *that he is of himself what he is.* We will surely say then, he is *all in all.* And that perfection, which before we judged vastly great, we will now conclude *altogether absolute*, and such beyond which no greater can be thought.

Adding I say to what pre-conceptions we had of his greatness, from the works which we see have been done by him (for why should we lose any ground we might esteem our selves to have gain'd before?) the consideration of of this necessary self-subsistence: And that no other reason is assignable of his being what he is, but the peculiar and incommunicable excellency of his own nature. Whereby he was not only able to make such a world; but did possess eternally and invariably in himself all that he is and hath: We cannot conceive that *all* to be less than absolutely universal, and comprehensive of whatsoever can lie within the whole compass of Being.

For when we find that among all other Beings (which is most certainly true not only of *actual*, but all *possible* Beings also) how perfect foever they are or may be in their own kinds; none of them, nor all of them together, are, ever can be, of that perfection, as to be of

themselves, without dependence on somewhat else, as their productive, yea and sustaining cause; we see, besides that their cause hath all the perfection, some way, in it that is to be found in them all: There is also that appropriate perfection belonging thereto, that it could be; and eternally is (yea and could not but be) only of it self, by the underived and incommunicable excellency of its own Being. And surely, what includes in it all the perfection of all actual and possible Beings, besides its own (for there is nothing possible which some cause, yea and even *this*, cannot produce) & unconceivably more; must needs be absolutely and every way perfect. Of all which perfections this is the radical one, that belongs to this common Cause and Author of all things, that he is *necessarily, and only self-subsisting*. For if this high Prerogative in point of Being had been wanting, nothing at all had ever been. Therefore we attribute to God the greatest thing that can be said or thought, (and not what is wholly divers from all other perfection, but which contains all others in it) when we affirm of him that *he is necessarily of himself*. For, though when we have bewildered and lost our selves (as we soon may) in the contemplation of this amazing subject, we readily indulge our wearied minds the ease and liberty of resolving this high excellency of self or necessary existence in a meer negation, and say that we mean by it nothing else, than that he was not from another: Yet surely if we
 would

would take some pains with our selves, and keep our slothful shifting thoughts to some exercise in this matter; though we can never comprehend that vast fulness of perfection which is imported in it (for it were not what we plead for, if we could comprehend it.) Yet we should soon see and confess, that it contains unspeakably more than a negation, even some great thing that is so much beyond our thoughts, that we shall reckon we have said but a little in saying we cannot conceive it. And that, when we have stretcht our understandings to the utmost of their line and measure, though we may suppose our selves to have conceived a great deal, there is infinitely more that we conceive not.

Wherefore that is a sober and most important truth which is occasionally drawn forth (as is supposed) from the so admired *D. Carter*, by the urgent objections of this very acute (friendly) adversary, *That the inexhaustible power of God is the reason for which he needed no cause; And that since that unexhausted power, or the immensity of his essence is most highly positive*, therefore he may be said to be of himself positively, *i. e.* not as if he did ever by any positive efficiency cause himself (which is most manifestly impossible) but that the positive excellency of his own being was such, as could never need, nor admit of being caused.

*Ad ob. in
Med. resp.
quarta.*

And that seems highly eternal (which is so largely insisted on by *Doctor Jackson* and di-

*Of the Es-
sence and
Attributes
of God.*

vers others) that what is without *cause* must also be without *limit* of being. Because all limitation proceeds from the cause of a thing, which imparted to it so much and no more; which argument, though it seem neglected by *Des Cartes*, and is opposed by his Antagonist: Yet I cannot but judge that the longer one meditates the less he shall understand, how any thing can be limited *ad intra* or from it self, &c. As the Author of the *Tentam. Phys. Theol.* speaks.

But that we may entertain our selves with some more particular considerations of *this necessary Being*; which may evince that general assertion of *its absolute plenitude or fulness of essence*. It appears to be such

IV.

As is, first, at the greatest imaginable distance from non-entity. For what can be at a greater, than that *which is necessarily*? which signifies as much as *whereto not to be is utterly impossible*. Now an utter impossibility not to be, or the uttermost distance from no Being, seems plainly to imply the absolute plenitude of all Being. And, if here it be said that, *to be necessarily*, and *of it self*, needs be understood to import no more than a firm possession of *that being which a thing hath*, be it never so scant or minute a portion of *being*. I answer, without insisting upon the ambiguity of the words *to be it seems*, indeed so; If we measure the signification of this expression by its first and more obvious appearance. But if you consider the matter more narrowly, you will find here

here is also signified *the nature and kind of the Being possessed*, as well as the *manner of possession, viz.* that it is a Being of so excellent and noble a kind, as that it can subsist alone without being beholden: which is so great an excellency as that it manifestly comprehends all other, or is the foundation of all that can be conceived besides. Which they that fondly dream of necessary matter, not considering, unwarily make one single atom a more excellent thing, than the whole frame of heaven and earth. *That* being supposed simply necessary, *this* the meerest piece of hap-hazard, the strangest chance imaginable, and beyond what any but themselves could ever have imagined. And which being considered, would give us to understand, that no minute or finite being can be necessarily.

And hence we may see what it is to be nearer, or at a further distance from *not-being*.

For these things that came *contingently* into being, or at the pleasure of a free cause, have all but a finite and limited being, whereof, some, having a smaller portion of being than others, approach so much the nearer to not-being. Proportionably, what hath its being *necessarily* and of it self, is at the farthest distance from no-being, as comprehending all being in it self. Or, to borrow the expressions, of an elegant Writer, translated into our own Language, ‘We have much more non-essence *Causin* than essence; If we have the essence of a ‘man, yet not of the Heavens, or of Angels.

“We are confined and limited within a particular essence, but God *who is what he is* comprehendeth all possible essences.

Nor is this precariously spoken, or, as what may be hoped to be granted upon courtesie. But let the matter be rigidly examined and discussed, and the certain truth of it will most evidently appear. For if any thing be, *in this sense*, remoter than other from no-Being, it must either be, *what is necessarily of it self*, or *what is contingently at the pleasure of the other*. But since nothing is, besides that self-originate necessary Being, but what was from it; and nothing from it but what was within its productive power; it's plain all that, with its own Being, was contained in it. And therefore, even in that sense, it is at the greatest distance from no-Being; as comprehending the utmost fulness of Being in it self, and consequently absolute perfection. Which will yet further appear, in what follows. We therefore add,

V. That necessary Being is most unmixed or *purest Being*. Without allay. That is *pure* which is full of it self. *Purity* is not here meant in a *corporeal* sense (which few will think) nor in the *moral*; but as with Metaphysicians it signifies *simplicity of essence*. And in its present use is more especially intended to signify that simplicity which is opposed to the composition of *act*, and *possibility*. We say then that *necessary Being* imports *purest actuality*. Which is the ultimate and highest perfection of Being.

For

For it signifies *no remaining possibility, yet unreplete*, or not fill'd up, and consequently the fullest exuberancy and entire confluence of all Being, as in its fountain and original source. We need not here look further to evince this than the native import of the very terms themselves; *necessity* and *possibility*; the latter whereof is not so fitly said to be excluded the former (as contingency is) but to be swallowed up of it; as fulness takes up all the space which were otherwise nothing but vacuity or emptiness. It is plain then that necessary Being, ingrosses all possible Being, both that is, and (for the same reason) that ever was so. For nothing can be or ever was in possibility to come into Being, but what either must spring, or hath sprung, from the necessary self-subsisting Being.

So that unto all that vast possibility, a proportionable actuality of this Being must be understood to correspond. Else the other were not possible. For nothing is possible to be produced which is not within the actual productive power of the necessary Being. I say within its actual productive power, for if its power for such production were not already actual, it could never become so, and so were none at all. Inasmuch as necessary being can never alter, and consequently can never come actually to be, what it, already, is not (upon which account it is truly said, *In aeternis pisse & esse sunt idem.*) Wherefore in it, is nothing else but pure actuality, as profound and vast,

as is the utmost possibility of all created or producible Being, *i. e.* It can be *nothing* other than it is, but *can do all things* (of which more hereafter.) It therefore stands oppos'd not only (more directly) to *impossibility of Being* (which is the most proper notion of no-Being) but some way, even to *possibility* also; That is the possibility of being any thing but what it is; as being every way compleat, and perfectly full already.

VI.

Again we might further add, that it is the most *abstracted Being*, or is Being in the very abstract. A thing much insisted on by some of the School-men. And the notion which with much obscurity they pursue (after their manner) may carry some such sense as this (if it may throughout be called sense) That whereas no created nature is capable of any other, than meer mental abstraction, but exists always in concretion with some subject, that, be it never so refined, is grosser and less perfect than it self; so that we can distinguish the mentally abstracted essence, and the thing which hath that essence, by which concretion essence is limited, and is only the particular essence of this or that thing, which hath or possesses that essence. The necessary Being is, in strict propriety, not so truly said to *have essence*, as to *be it*; and exist separately by it self; not as limited to this or that thing. Whence it is, in it self *universal essence*, containing therefore (not formally, but eminently) the being of all things in perfect simplicity.

Whence

Whence all its own attributes are capable of being affirmed of it in the abstract, * that it is Wisdom, Power, Goodness, and not only hath these, and that, upon this account, that it is a Being which is necessarily and of it self. For that which is necessarily and of it self, is not whatsoever it is by the accession of any thing to it self; whereof necessary Being is incapable. But by its own simple and unvariable essence. Other Being is upon such terms powerful, wise, yea, and existent, as that it may cease to be so. Whereas to necessary Being it is manifestly repugnant and impossible either simply not to be, or to be any thing else, but *what* and *as* it is. And though other things may have properties belonging to their essence not separable from it, yet they are not their very essence it self: And, whereas they are in a possibility to lose their very existence, the knot and ligament of whatsoever is most intimate to their actual being, all then falls from them together: Here essence, properties, and existence are all one simple thing that can never cease, decay, or change, because the whole being is necessary. Now, all this being supposed, of the force of that form of speech; when we affirm any thing *in the abstract* of another, we may admit the common sense of men to be the interpreter. For every body can tell (though they do not know the meaning of the word *abstract*) what we intend when we use that phrase or manner of speaking. As when we say, by way of hyperbolical commendation,

such

* To which purpose we may take notice of the words of one, not the less worthy to be named, for not being reckoned of that forementioned order. *Si enim denominative de eo quippiam predicaretur abstractum esset tum aliud ab ipso, tum ipso prius. Quod sane impium est quare neque ens est sed essentia, neque bonus sed bonitas est.* Jul. Scal. Exerc. 365.

such a man is not only learned, but learning it self; or he not only hath much of Virtue, Justice, and Goodness in him, but he is Virtue, Justice, and Goodness it self (as was once said of an excellent Pagan *Virtuoso*, that I may borrow leave to use that word in the moral sense) every one knows the phrase intends the appropriating all Learning, Virtue, Justice, Goodness to such a one. Which, because they know unappropriable to any man, they easily understand it to be, in such a case, a rhetorical strain, and form of speech. And yet could not know that, if also they did not understand its proper and native import. And so it may as well be understood what is meant by saying of God, he is being it self. With which sense may be reconciled that of (the so named *Dionysius the Areopagite*; † That God is not so properly said to be of, or be in, or to have (or partake) of Being as that it is of him, &c. Inasmuch as he is the pre-existent Being to all Being, *i. e.* If we understand him to mean *all besides his own*. In which sense taking Being, for that which is communicated and imparted, He may truly be said (as this Author and the Platonists generally speak)* to be super-essential or super-substantial. But how fitly *being* is taken in that restrained sense we may say more hereafter.

† Καὶ αὐτὸ
δὲ τὸ εἶναι
ἐκ τοῦ ὄντος
οὐκ ἔστι, καὶ
αὐτὸν ἔχει δὲ
τὸ εἶναι, καὶ
ἐκ αὐτοῦ τὸ
εἶναι, καὶ
αὐτὸν ἔχει τὸ
εἶναι, καὶ
αὐτὸν ἔχει τὸ
εἶναι, καὶ
αὐτὸν ἔχει
τὸ εἶναι.

De Divi-
nis Homi

Co. 5.

* Proclus
in Plat.
Theol. l. 2.
c. 4.

In the mean time, what hath been said concerning this abstractedness of the necessary Being, hath in it some things so unintelligible, and is accompanied with so great (unmentioned)

ned) difficulties (which it would give us, perhaps, more labour than profit to discuss) and the absolute perfection of God appears so evidenceable otherwise, by what hath been and may be further said, that we are no way concern'd to lay the stress of the cause on this matter only.

Moreover, *necessary Being* is the cause and author of all Being besides. Whatsoever is not necessary is caused; for not having Being of it self, it must be put into Being by somewhat else. And inasmuch as there is no middle sort of Being betwixt necessary and not necessary, and, all that is not necessary is caused, 'tis plain that which is necessary must be the cause of all the rest. And surely what is the cause of all being besides its own, must needs, one way or other, contain its own and all other in it self; and is, consequently, comprehensive of the utmost fulness of Being. Or is the absolutely perfect Being, (as must equally, be acknowledged) unless any one would imagine himself to have got the notice of some perfection that lies without the compass of all *Being*.

VII.

Nor is it an exception worth the mentioning, that there may be a conception of *possible being* or *perfection*, which the necessary being hath not caused. For it is, manifestly, as well the *possible cause* of all *possible Being* and *perfection*, as the *actual cause* of what is *actual*. And what it is possible to it to produce it hath within its productive power, as hath been said before.

And

And, if the matter did require it, we might say further, that the same necessary Being, which hath been the productive cause, is, also *the continual root and basis of all Being, which is not necessary*. For what is of it self and cannot, by the special priviledge of its own Being, *but be*, needs nothing to sustain it, or needs not trust to any thing besides its own eternal stability. But what is not so seems to need a continual reproduction every moment, and to be no more capable of continuing in Being by it self, than it was by it self of coming into Being. For (as is frequently alledged by that so often mentioned Author) since there is no connexion betwixt the present and future time, but what is easily capable of rupture, it is no way consequent that, because I am now, I shall therefore be the next moment further than as the free Author of my Being shall be pleased to continue his own most arbitrary influence for my support. This seems highly probable to be true, whether that reason signify any thing or nothing. And that thence also continual conservation differs not from creation. Which, whether (as is said by the same Author) it be one of the things that are *manifest by natural light*; or whether a positive act be needful to the annihilation of created things; but only the withholding of influence, let them examine that apprehend the cause to need it. And if upon enquiry they judge it at least evidenceable by natural light to be so, (as I doubt not they will) they will have
this

this further ground upon which thus to reason, That, inasmuch as the necessary Being subsists wholly by it self, and is that whereon all other doth totally depend. It hereupon follows, that it must, some way, contain in it self all Being. We may yet further add,

That the necessary Being we have evinced, though it have caused, and do continually sustain all things, yet doth not, it self, in the mean time suffer any *diminution*. It is not possible, nor consistent with the very terms *necessary Being* that it can. 'Tis true, that if such a thing as a necessary Atom were admitted, that would be also undiminisbable (it were not else an atom.) But as nothing then can flow from it (as from a perfect parvitude nothing can) so it can effect nothing. (And the reason is the same of many as of one.) Nor would undiminisbability, upon such terms, signifie any thing to the magnifying the value of such a trifle.

But this is none of the present case. For our eyes tell us here is a world in being, which we are sure is not it self necessarily; and was therefore made by him that is. And *that*, without *mutation or change* in him; against which the very notion of a necessary Being is most irreconcilably reluctant; and therefore without diminution, which cannot be conceived without change.

ἡ δὲ οὐσία ἀρχὴ καὶ τέλος αἰώνιον ἀκίνητον, ὃν οὐκ ἔστιν ἡμετέραν αἰσθάνεσθαι οὐδὲ νοεῖν οὐδὲ φαντασάμεθα. ΠΛΟΤΙΝΟΥ ΕΝΝ. 6. 1. 9. 6. 9.

Ἐν δὲ τῇ οὐσίᾳ
τῇ οὐσίᾳ
καὶ τῇ οὐσίᾳ
καὶ τῇ οὐσίᾳ
καὶ τῇ οὐσίᾳ

Where-

Wherefore how inexhaustible a fountain of life, being, and all perfection have we here represented to our thoughts! from whence this vast Universe is sprung, and is continually springing, and that in the mean time, receiving no recruits or foreign supplies, yet suffers no impairment or lessening of it self! What is this but absolute all-fulness! And it is so far from arguing any deficiency or mutability, in his nature, that there is this continual issue of power and virtue from him, that it demonstrates its high excellency that this can be without decay or mutation. For of all this, we are as certain as we can be of any thing: That many things are not necessarily, That the *Being* must be necessary from whence all things else proceed, and that with necessary Being change is inconsistent. It is therefore unreasonable to entertain any doubt *that things are so*, which most evidently appear to be so; only because it is beyond our measure and compass to apprehend, *how they are so*. And it would be to doubt (against our own eyes) whether there be any such thing as motion in the world, or composition of bodies, because we cannot give a clear account (so as to avoid all difficulties, and the entanglement of the common sophisms about them) how these things are performed. In the present case, we have no difficulty but what is to be resolved into the perfection of the Divine Nature, and the imperfection of our own. And how easily conceivable is it, that somewhat may be more perfect than

than that we can conceive it. If we cannot conceive the manner of Gods causation of things, or the nature of his causative influence, it only shews their high excellency, and gives us the more ground (since this is that into which both his own revelation and the reason of things most naturally lead us to resolve all) to admire the mighty efficacy of his all-creating and all-sustaining *Will* and *Word*; that in that ealie unexpensive way by his meer *fiat*, so great things should be performed.

We only say further, That this necessary Being is such to which *nothing can be added*; so as that it should be really greater, or better, or more perfect than it was before. And this not only signifies that nothing can be joyned to it, so as to become a part of it, (which necessary Being, by its natural immutability manifestly refuses.) But we also intend by it, that all things else, with it, contain not more of real perfection than it doth alone. Which (though it carries a difficulty with it that we intend not wholly to overlook when it shall be seasonable to consider it) is a most apparent and demonstrable truth. For it is plain that all being and perfection which is not necessary, proceeds from that which is, as the cause of it. And that no cause could communicate any thing to another which it had not some way in it self. Wherefore it is manifestly consequent that all other being was wholly before comprehended in that which is necessary, as having been wholly produced by it. And what is wholly com-

IX.

comprehended of another (*i. e.* within its productive power) *before it be produced*, can be no real addition to it, *when it is.*

Now what can be supposed to import fullness of Being and perfection, more than this [impossibility of addition] or that there can be nothing greater or more perfect?

And now these considerations are mentioned without solicitude, whether they be so many exactly distinct heads. For admit that they be not all distinct, but some are involved with others of them; yet the same truth may more powerfully strike some understandings in one form of representation, others in another. And it suffices, that (though not severally) they do together plainly evidence, that the necessary Being includes the absolute entire fullness of all Being and perfection actual and possible within it self.

Having therefore thus dispatcht that former part of this undertaking; the eviction of an *every way perfect Being*, we shall now need to labour little in the other, *viz.*

X. Secondly, the more express deduction of the *infiniteness* and *onliness* thereof.

For as to the former of these it is in effect the same thing that hath been already proved. Since to the *fullest* notion *infiniteness*, *absolute perfection* seems every way most *fully* to correspond. For absolute perfection includes all conceivable perfection, leaves nothing excluded. And what doth most simple infiniteness import, but to have nothing for a boundary;

or

or (which is the same) not to be bounded at all ?

We intend not now , principally , infiniteness extrinsically considered ; with respect to *time* and *place*, as to be *eternal* and *immense* do import : But intrinsically, as importing bottomless profundity of essence, and the full confluence of all kinds and degrees of perfection without bound or limit. This is the same with *absolute perfection* Which yet , if any should suspect not to be so , They might, however, easily and expressly prove it of the necessary Being upon the same grounds that have been already alledged for proof of *that*.

As that the necessary Being hath *actuality* answerable to the utmost *possibility* of the creature ; That it is the only root and cause of all other Being. The actual cause of whatsoever is actually ; The possible cause of whatsoever is possible to-be. Which is most apparently true. And hath been evidenced to be so, by what hath been said, so lately, as that it needs not be repeated. That is, in short, that nothing, that is not necessarily, and of it self, could ever have been or can be , but as it hath been, or shall be put into Being by that which is necessarily and of it self. So that this is as apparent as that any thing is, or can be.

But now let sober reason judge , whether there can be any bounds or limits set to the possibility of producible Being, either in respect of kinds, numbers, or degrees of perfection ? Who can say or think , when there can be so

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many sorts of creatures produced (or at least individuals of those sorts) that there can be no more? Or that any creature is so perfect as that none can be made more perfect? which indeed to suppose were to suppose an actual infiniteness in the creature. And then it being, however, still, but somewhat that is created or made, how can its Maker but be infinite? For surely no body will be so absurd as to imagine an infinite effect of a finite cause.

Either therefore the creature is (or sometime may be actually made) so perfect that it cannot be more perfect, or not. If not, we have our purpose; that there is an infinite possibility on the part of the creature always unplete; and, consequently, a proportionable infinite actuality of power on the Creators part. Infinite power, I say, otherwise there were not that (acknowledged) infinite possibility of producible being. For nothing is producible that no power can produce. And I say infinite *actual power*, because the Creator being what he is necessarily, what power he hath not actually, he can never have, as was argued before.

But if it be said, the creature either is, or may sometime be, actually so perfect as that it cannot be more perfect. That, as was said, will suppose it actually infinite, and therefore much more that its *cause* is so. And therefore in this way our present purpose would be gained also.

But we have no mind to gain it this latter way, as we have no need. 'Tis in it self plain to any one that considers that this possibility on
the

the creatures part can never actually be filled up; That it is a bottomless abyfs, in which our thoughts may still gradually go down deeper and deeper without end: that is, that still more might be produced, or more perfect creatures, and still more, everlastingly without any bound, which sufficiently infers what we aim at, that the Creators actual power is proportionable.

And indeed the supposition of the former can neither consist with the Creators perfection, nor with the imperfection of the creature, it would infer that the Creators productive power might be exhausted, that he could do no more, and so place an actual boundary to him and make him finite. It were to make the creature actually full of being, that it could receive no more, and so would make that infinite.

But it may be said, since all power is in order to act, and the very notion of possibility imports that such a thing, of which it is said, may some time be actual; it seems very unreasonable to say that the infinite power of a cause cannot produce an infinite effect. Or that infinite possibility can never become infinite actuality. For that were to say and unsay the same thing of the same. To affirm omnipotency and impotency of the same cause, possibility and impossibility of the same effect.

How urgent soever this difficulty may seem, there needs nothing but patience and attentive consideration to disentangle our selves, and get through it. For if we will but allow our

selves the leisure to consider, we shall find that [power] and [possibility] must here be taken not simply and abstractly, but as each of them is in conjunction with [i. finite.] And what is [infinite,] but [that which can never be travell'd through] or whereof no end can be ever arriv'd unto? Now suppose infinite power had produced all that it could produce, there were an end of it, (*i. e.* it had found limits and a boundary beyond which it could not go.) If infinite possibility were filled up there were an end of that also, and so neither were infinite.

It may then be further urged that there is therefore no such thing as infinite power or possibility. For how is that cause said to have infinite power, which can never produce its proportionable effect, or that effect have infinite possibility, which can never be produced. It would follow then that power and possibility which are said to be infinite, are neither power nor possibility; and that infinite must be rejected as a notion either repugnant to it self or to any thing unto which we shall go about to affix it.

I answer, it only follows, *They are neither power or possibility, whereof there is any bound or end; or that can ever be gone through.* And how absurd is it that they shall be said (as they cannot but be) to be both *very vast*, if they were *finite*; and *none at all*, for no other reason but their *being infinite*! And for the pretended repugnancy of the very notion of *infinite*, it is plain, that, though it cannot be, to

us, *distinctly* comprehensible, yet it is no more repugnant, than the notion of finiteness. Nor when we have conceived of power in the general, and in our own thoughts set bounds to it, and made it finite, is it a greater difficulty, (nay, they that try will find it much easier) again to think away these bounds, and make it infinite. And let them that judge the notion of infiniteness inconsistent, therefore reject it if they can. They will feel it re-impoling it self upon them, whether they will or no, and sticking as close to their minds as their very thinking power it self. And who was, therefore ever heard of, that did not acknowledge some or other *infinite*? Even the *Epicureans* themselves though they confined their Gods, they did not the universe. Which, also, though some *Peripatetique* Atheists made finite in respect of place, yet in duration they made it infinite. Though the notion of an eternal world is incumbred with such absurdities and impossibilities, as whereof there is not the least shadow in that of an every way infinite Deity.

Briefly, it consists not with the nature of a *contingent* being to be infinite. For what is upon such terms, only, in being, is reducible to nothing, at the will and pleasure of its maker; but 'tis a manifest repugnancy, that what is at the utmost distance from nothing (as infinite fulness of being cannot but be) should be reducible thither.

Therefore *actual infinity* cannot but be the peculiar privilege of that which is *necessarily*.

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shop of
Clogher in
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templat.
Metaphys.*

Yet may we not say, that it is not within the compass of infinite power to make a creature that may be infinite. For it argues not want of power that this is never to be done, but a still infinitely abounding surplussage of it, that can never be drained, or drawn dry. Nor, that the thing it self is simply impossible. *It may be* (as is compendiously exprest by that most succinct and polite Writer D. Boyle) *in fieri*, not *in factio esse*. That is, it might be a thing always in doing, but never done. Because it belongs to the infinite perfection of God, that his power be never actually exhausted; and to the infinite imperfection of the creature, that its possibility or capacity be never filled up. To the necessary self-subsisting Being to be always full and communicative, to the communicated contingent Being, to be ever empty and craving. One may be said to have that, some way, in his power, not only which he can do presently, all at once, but which he can do by degrees, and supposing he have sufficient time. So a man may be reckoned able to do that, as the uttermost adequate effect of his whole power, which it is only possible to him to have effected with the expiration of his life-time. Gods measure is eternity. What if we say then, this is a work possible to be accomplished, even as the ultimate proportionable issue of Divine Power (if it were his will, upon

upon which all contingent being depends, that the creature should be ever growing in the mean while) at the expiration of eternity? If, then, you be good at suppositions, suppose that expired, and this work finished both together.

Wherefore if you ask, why *can* the work of making created being infinite never be done? The answer will be, because eternity (in every imaginable instant whereof the inexhaustible power of God can if he will be still adding either more creatures or more perfection to a creature) can never be at an end.

We might further argue the *Infinity* of the necessary Being from what hath been said of its undiminisshableness by all its vast communications. Its impossibility to receive any accession to it self by any its (so great productions) both which are plainly demonstrable (as we have seen) of the necessary Being, even as it is such, and do clearly (as any thing can) bespeak infinity. But we have thence argued its absolute perfection which so evidently includes the same thing that all this latter labour might have been spared, were it not that it is the genius of some persons not to be content that they have the substance of a thing said, unless it be also said in their own terms. And that the express asserting of Gods *simple infiniteness*, in those very terms, is, in that respect, the more requisite as it is a form of expression more known and usual.

There are yet some remaining difficulties in the matter we have been discoursing of;

For how-soever disputable it may be, whether whatsoever is infinite can have nothing added to it; yet it is without dispute, that whatsoever is so full as that nothing can be added to it is infinite.

XII.

which partly through the debility of our own minds we cannot but find ; and which partly the subtilty of sophistical wits doth create to us. It will be requisite we have some consideration of, at least, some of them, which we will labour to dispatch with all possible brevity. Leaving those that delight in the sport of tying and loosing knots, or of weaving snares, wherein cunningly to entangle themselves, to be entertained by the School-men ; among whom they may find enough upon this subject to give them exercise unto weariness ; and (if their minds have any relish of what is more savory,) I may venture to say unto loathing.

It may possibly be here said in short ; But what have we all this while been doing ? we have been labouring to prove that necessary Being comprehends the absolute fulness of all Being : And what doth this signifie, but that all being is necessary ? That God is all things, and so that every thing is God. That we hereby confound the being of a man, yea, of a stone, or whatever we can think of with one another, and all with the Being of God.

And again, how is it possible there should be an infinite self-subsisting Being. For then how can there be any finite ? since such infinite Being includes all Being, and there can be nothing beyond all.

Here therefore it is requisite, having hitherto only asserted and endeavoured to evince that *some way* necessary Being doth include all being, to shew in *what way*. And it is plain

plain it doth not include all in the same way. It doth not so include that which is created by it, and depends on it, as it doth its own, which is uncreated and independent.

The *one* it includes *as its own* or rather as it self, the *other*, as what it is, and ever was, with- in its power to produce. If any better like the terms *formally* and *virtually* they may serve themselves of them at their own pleasure, which yet, as to many, will but more darkly speak the same sense.

We must here know, the productive power of God terminates not upon himself, as if he were by it capable of adding any thing to his own appropriate Being; which is (as hath been evinced already) infinitely full and incapable of addition, and is therefore all pure act: But on the creature, where there is still a perpetual possibility never filled up; because Divine power can never be exhausted. And thus all that of Being is *virtually* in him, which, either having produced, he doth totally sustain, or, not being produced, he can produce.

Whereupon it is ealie to understand how necessary being may comprehend all Being and yet all being not be necessary. It comprehends all Being besides what it self is, as having had within the compass of its productive power whatsoever hath actually sprung from it, and having within the compass of the same power whatsoever is still possible to be produced. Which no more confounds such produced or producible Being with that necessary being which

which is its cause, than it confounds all the effects of humane power with one another, and with the being of a man, to say that he virtually comprehended them (so far as they were producible by him) within his power. And is no wiser an inference from the former, than it would be from this latter, that an house, a book, and a child are the same thing with one another, and with the person that produced them, because so far as they were produced by him, he had it in his power to produce them. And that the effects of Divine power are produced thereby totally, whereas those of humane power are produced by it but in part only, doth, as to the strength and reasonableness of the argument, nothing alter the case.

And as to the next, that infinite being should seem to exclude all finite. I confess that such as are so disposed might here even wrangle continually, as they might do about any thing, in which infiniteness is concern'd: And yet therein shew themselves (as *Seneca* I remember speaks in another case) not a whit the more learned, but the more *troublesom*. But if one would make short work of it, and barely deny that infinite being excludes finite (as *Scotus* doth little else; * besides denying the consequence of the argument by which it was before enforced, *viz.* [that an infinite body would exclude a finite; for where should the finite be when the infinite should fill up all space? And therefore by parity of reasons, why should not infinite being exclude finite?]) shewing the disparity

* *Distinct.*

2. 2.

2. 1.

parity of the two cases) it would perhaps give them *some trouble* also to prove it. For which way would they go to work? Infinite self-subsisting Being includes all Being, very true, and therefore we say it includes finite. And what then? doth it because it includes it, therefore exclude it? And let the matter be soberly considered, somewhat of finite being and power we say (and apprehend no knot or difficulty in the matter) can extend so far as to produce some proportionable effect, or can do such and such things. And what, doth it seem likely then that infinite being and power can therefore do just nothing? Is it not a reason of mighty force, and confoundingly demonstrative, that an Agent can do nothing, or cannot possibly produce any the least thing, only because he is of infinite power?

For if there be a simple inconsistency, between an infinite Being and a finite, that will be the case; that, because the former is infinite, therefore it can produce nothing. For what it should produce cannot consist with it (*i. e.* even not being finite; and then certainly if we could suppose the effect infinite, much less.) But what, therefore, is power the less for being infinite? or can infinite power, even because it is infinite, do nothing? what can be said or thought more absurd or void of sense? Or shall it be said that the infiniteness of power is no hinderance but the infiniteness of Being? But how wild an imagination were that of a finite being that were of infinite power?

And

And besides, is that power somewhat or nothing? surely it will not be said it is nothing. Then it is some Being. And if some power be some being, what then is infinite power, is not that infinite being? And now therefore if this infinite can produce any thing, which it were a strange madness to deny, it can at least produce some finite thing. Wherefore there is no inconsistency between the infinite and finite beings? unless we say the effect produced even by being produced must destroy, or (even infinitely) impair its cause, so as to make it cease at least to be infinite. But that also cannot possibly be said of that which is *infinite* and *necessary*; which, as hath been shewn, cannot, by whatsoever productions, suffer any diminution or decay. If here it be further urged. But here is an infinite being now supposed, let next be supposed the production of a finite. This is not the same with the other; for surely infinite and finite are distinguishable enough, and do even infinitely differ. This finite is either something or nothing; nothing it cannot be said; for it was supposed a Being, and produced; but the production of nothing is no production. It is somewhat then; here is therefore an infinite Being, and a finite now besides. The infinite it was said cannot be diminished; the finite, a real something is added. Is there therefore nothing more of existent Being than there was before this production? It is answered; nothing more than virtually was before; for when we suppose an infinite Being, and

and afterwards a finite. This finite is not to be lookt upon as emerging or springing up of it self out of nothing, or as proceeding from some third thing as its cause, but as produced by that infinite, or springing out of that, which it could not do, but as being before virtually contained in it. For the infinite produces nothing, which it could not produce. And what it could produce was before contained in it as in the power of its cause. And to any one that attends and is not disposed to be quarrellsome, this is as plain, and easie to be understood, as how any finite thing may produce another, or rather more plain and easie, because a finite Agent doth not entirely contain its effect within it self, or in its own power, as an infinite doth. If yet it be again said, that which is limited is not infinite, but suppose any finite thing produced into being after a pre-existent infinite, this infinite becomes now limited; for the being of the finite is not that of the infinite, each hath its own distinct Being.

And it cannot be said of the one, it is the other; therefore each is limited to it self. I answer, that which was infinite becomes not hereby less than it was; for it hath produced nothing but what was before virtually contained in it, and still is (for it still totally sustains the other.) But whatsoever it actually doth, it can do, or hath within its power: therefore if it were infinite before, and is not now become less, it is still infinite.

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Wherefore the true reason why the position of a finite thing after a supposed all-comprehending infinite doth no way intrench upon or detract from the others all-comprehensive infinity, is, that it was formerly contained, and still is, within the virtue and power of the other.

It is true, that if we should suppose any thing besides that supposed infinite to be of it self that would infer a limitation of the former. Infer, I say, not cause it, that is, it would not make it cease to be all-comprehendingly infinite, but it would argue it not to have been so before; and that the supposition of its infinity was a false supposition, because it would then appear, that the former did not comprehend all being any way in it self. Somewhat being now found to be *in Being*, which hath no dependence thereon: whence it would be evident neither can be so. Of which some good use may be made to a further purpose by and by.

Here only we may by the way annex, as a just corollary from the foregoing discourse, that as the supposition of necessary self-subsisting matter was before shewn to be a *vain*, it now also appears plainly to be altogether an *impossible* supposition. For since the necessary self-subsisting Being, is infinite, and all-comprehensive; and if matter were supposed necessary, we must have another necessary being to form the world inasmuch as matter is not self-active, much less intelligent (as it hath both

both been proved it cannot be, and that the Former of this world must be.) It is therefore out of question, that because both cannot be *all-comprehensive*, they cannot both be necessary; Nor can the vastly different kinds or natures of these things save the business; for be they of what kinds they will, they are still Beings. Besides, if matter were necessary, and self-subsisting, every particle of it must be so. And then we shall have not only two, but an infinite number of such infinities, and all of the same kind. But *Being* only of this or that sort (as is apparent where more sorts do exist than one) could not be simply infinite, except as the other depends thereon; and as this one is radically comprehensive of all the rest, that can come under the general and most common notion of *Being*. For that there is some general notion, wherein all being agrees, and by which it differs from no being, is, I think, little to be doubted; how unequally soever, and dependently, the one upon the other, the distinct sorts do partake therein. Whereupon the expressions [*super-essential*] and others like it, spoken of God, must be understood, as rhetorical strains, importing more reverence, than rigid truth. Except by essence (as was formerly said) only that which is created be meant. And that only a purer and more noble kind of essence were intended to be asserted to him, *

* And we must suppose somewhat agreeable to this to be, *Plotinus* his meaning when he denies knowledge to be in God, and yet also denies that there is in him any ignorance, that is that he means his intelligence is

of an infinitely distinct and more excellent sort from that which he causes in us, as appears by his annexed reason, *de divinis nominibus*, *Enn. 6. l. 9. c. 6.*

which

which yet seems also unwarrantable and injurious that a word of that import should be so misapplied and transferr'd from the substance, to signifie nothing but the shadow, rather, of Being. And that they who would seem zealously concern'd to appropriate all Being unto God, should, in the height of their transport, so far forget themselves, as to set him above all being, and so deny him any at all. For surely that which simply is above all being is no being.

XIII.

And as to the *unity* or *oneliness* rather of this being (or of the God-head) the deduction thereof seems plain and easie from what hath been already proved ; that is from the *absolute perfection* thereof. For though some do toil themselves much about this matter ; and others plainly conclude that it is not to be proved at all in a rational way, but only by divine revelation. Yet I conceive, they that follow the method (having proved some *necessary self-subsisting being*, the root and original spring of all Being and perfection actual and possible ; which is as plain as any thing can be) of deducing from thence the absolute all comprehending perfection of such necessary being will find their work as good as done. For nothing seems more evident than that there cannot be two (much less more) such Beings. Inasmuch as *one* comprehends in it self all being and perfection ; for there can be but *one all* , without which is nothing. So that, one such being supposed, another can have nothing remaining to it.

it. Yea so far is it therefore, if we suppose one infinite and absolutely perfect being, that there can be another independent thereon (and of a depending infinity we need not say more than we have, which if any such could be, cannot possibly be a distinct God) that there cannot be the minutest finite thing imaginable, which that supposed infinity doth not comprehend, or that can stand apart from it, on any distinct basis of its own. And that this matter may be left, as plain as we can make it; supposing it already most evident.

That there is actually existing an absolute entire fulness of Wisdom, Power, so of all other perfection.

That absolute entire fulness of perfection is infinite.

That this infinite perfection must have its primary seat somewhere.

That its primary original seat can be no where but in necessary self-subsisting Being.

We hereupon add, that if we suppose *multitude*, or any plurality, of necessary self-originate Beings concurring to make up the seat or subject of this infinite perfection. *Each one* must either be of finite, and partial perfection; or infinite, and absolute. Not infinite and absolute; because one self-originate infinitely and absolutely perfect being, will necessarily comprehend all perfection and leave nothing to the rest. Not finite, because many finites can never make one infinite; much less can many broken parcels or fragments of perfection, ever make

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infinite

infinite and absolute perfection: Even though their number (if that were possible) were infinite. For the perfection of unity, would still be wanting, and their communication and concurrence to any work (even such as we see is done) be infinitely imperfect, and impossible.

We might, more at large, and with a (much more pompous) number and apparatus of arguments, have shewn, that there can be no more Gods than one. But to such as had rather be informed than bewildered and lost, clear proof that is shorter and more comprehensive, will be more grateful.

Nor doth this proof of the uniting of the God-head any way impugn the Trinity, which is by Christians believed therein (and whereof some Heathens, as is known, have not been wholly without some apprehension, however they came by it) or exclude a sufficient uncreated ground of Trinal distinction. As would be seen if that great difference of Beings *necessary* and *contingent*, be well stated; and what is by eternal necessary emanation of the *Divine Nature*, be duly distinguished from the arbitrary products of the *Divine Will*. And the matter be thoroughly examined, whether, herein, be not a sufficient distinction of that which is increated, and that which is created. In this way it is possible it might be cleared, how a Trinity in the God-head *may be* very consistently with the unity thereof. But *that it is*, we cannot know, but by his telling us so. It being among the many things of God which
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are not to be known, but by the Spirit of God revealing and testifying them, in and according to the holy Scriptures. As the things of a man are not known but by the spirit of a man. And what further evidence we may justly and reasonably take from those Scriptures, even in reference to some of the things hitherto discoursed, may be hereafter shewn.

C H A P. V.

Demands in reference to what hath been hitherto discoursed, with some reasonings thereupon:

1. *Is it possible, that, upon supposition of This Beings existence, it may be, in any way suitable to our present state, made known to us that it doth exist? Proved 1. That it may.*
2. *That, since any other fit way, that can be thought on, is as much liable to exception as that we have already: This must be, therefore, sufficient. Strong Impressions. Glorious Apparitions. Terrible Voices. Surprising Transformations. If these necessary. Is it needful they be universal? Frequent?*

If not, more rare things of this sort not wanting.

2 Demand. *Can Subjects, remote from their Prince, sufficiently be assured of his existence?*

3 Demand. *Can we be sure there are men on earth?*

- I. **A**ND if any should in the mean time, still remain either doubtful, or apt to cavil, after all that hath been said, for proof of that Beings existence which we have described, I would only add these few things, by way of enquiry or demand, viz.

First, Do they believe, upon supposition of the existence of such a Being, that it is possible
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it may be made known to us, in our present state and circumstances, by means not unsuitable thereto, or inconvenient to the order and government of the world, *that it doth exist?* It were strange to say or suppose, that a Being of so high perfection as this we have hitherto given an account of, *if he is*, cannot in any fit way make it known *that he is*, to an intelligent and apprehensive sort of creatures.

If, indeed, *he is*; and be the common cause, Author and Lord of us and all things (which we do now but suppose. And we may desie cavil to alledge any thing that is so much as colourable against the possibility of the supposition) surely he hath done greater things than the making of it known *that he is*. It is no unapprehensible thing. There hath been no inconsistent notion hitherto given of him. Nothing said concerning him; but will well admit that it is possible such a Being may be now existant. Yea we not only can conceive, but we actually have (and cannot but have) *some conception*, of the several attributes we have ascribed to him; so as to apply them (severally) to somewhat else, if we will not apply them (joyntly) to him. We cannot but admit there is *some eternal necessary Being*; somewhat that is *of it self, active*; somewhat that is *powerful, wise, and good*. And these notions have in them no repugnancy to one another; wherefore it is not impossible they may meet and agree together in full perfection to one and the same existent Being. And hence it is ma-

nifestly no unapprehensible thing, *that such a Being doth exist*. Now supposing, that it doth exist, and hath been to us the cause and Author of our Being; hath given us the reasonable, intelligent nature which we find our selves possessors of; and that very power whereby we apprehend the existence of such a Being as he is *to be possible* (all which we for the present do still but suppose) while also his actual existence is not unapprehensible, were it not the greatest madness imaginable to say, that *if he do exist*, he cannot also make our apprehensive nature understand this apprehensible thing that he *doth exist*? We will therefore take it for granted, and as a thing which no man well in his wits will deny, *that upon supposition such a Being, the Cause and Author of all things do exist*, he might, in some convenient way or other, with sufficient evidence, make it known to such creatures as we, so as to beget in us a rational certainty *that he doth exist*.

Upon which presumed ground we will only reason thus or assume to it; *That there is no possible, and fit way of doing it; which is not liable to as much exception, as the evidence we already have*. Whence it will be consequent, that if the thing be possible to be fitly done, it is done already. That is, that if we can apprehend, how it may be possible such a Being, actually existent, might give us that evidence of his existence that should be suitable to our present state, and sufficient to out-weigh all objections to the contrary (without which it
were

were not rationally sufficient.) And that we can apprehend no possible way of doing this, which will not be liable to the same or equal objections as may be made against the present means we have for the begetting of this certainty in us, then we have already sufficient evidence of this Beings existence. That is such as ought to prevail against all objections, and obtain our assent that it doth exist.

Here it is only needful to be considered what ways can be thought of, which we will say might *assure us* in this matter, that we already have not. And what might be objected against them, equally, as against the means we now have.

Will we say such a Being, if he did actually exist, might ascertain us of his existence by some powerful impression of that truth upon our minds? II.

We will not insist, what there is of this already. Let them consider who gainsay, what they can find of it in their own minds. And whether they are not engaged by their Atheistical inclinations in a contention against themselves, and their more natural sentiments: From which they find it a matter of no small difficulty to be delivered? It was not for nothing, that even *Epicurus* himself calls this of *an existing Deity*, a *Proleptical Notion*. But you may say, the impression might have been *simply universal*, and *so irresistible*, as to prevent or overbear all doubt or inclination to doubt.

And, first, for the *universality* of it, why

may we not suppose it already sufficiently universal? As hath been heretofore alledged. With what confidence can the few dissenting Atheists, that have professed to be of another persuasion, put that value upon themselves, as to reckon their dissent considerable enough to implede the universality of this impression. Or what doth it signifie more to that purpose, than some few instances may do, of persons so stupidly foolish as to give much less discovery of any rational faculty, than some beasts, to the impugning the universal rationality of mankind?

Besides that, *your contrary profession* is no sufficient argument of your *contrary persuasion*, much less, that you never had any stamp or impression of a Deity upon your minds, or that you have quite raz'd it out. It is much to be suspected that you hold not your contrary persuasion, with that unthaken confidence, and freedom from all fearful and suspicious misgivings, as that you have much more reason to brag of your dis-belief for the strength, than you have for the goodness of it. And that you have those qualmish fits, which bewray the impression (at least to your own notice and reflection, if you would but allow your selves the liberty of so much^l converse with your selves) that you will not confess, and yet cannot utterly deface.

But if in this you had quite won the day, and were masters of your design; were it not pretty to suppose that the common consent of
man.

mankind would be a good argument of the existence of a Deity. If it be so universal as to include your vote and suffrage (as no doubt it is without you a better than you can answer) but that when you have made an hard shift to withdraw your assent, you have undone the Deity and Religion! Doth this cause stand and fall with you? Unto which you can contribute about as much as the fly to the triumph! was that true before, which now your hard-laboured dissent hath made false?

But if this impression were simply universal, so as also to include you, it matters not what men *would* say or object against it; (it is to be supposed they would be in no disposition to object any thing.) But what were *to be said*; or what the case it self, objectively considered, would admit. And though it would not (as now it doth not) admit of any thing to be said to any purpose; yet the same thing were still to be said that you now say. And if we should but again unsuppose so much of the former supposition, as to imagine that some few should have made their escape, and disburdened themselves of all apprehensions of God. Would they not with the same impudence as you now do, say that all Religion were nothing else but Enthusiastical Fanaticism? And that all mankind, besides themselves, were enslaved-fools?

And for the meer *irresistableness* of this impression; 'Tis true it would take away all disposition to oppose, but it may be presumed this

this is none of the *rational evidence* which we suppose you to mean ; when you admit (if you do admit) that, some way or other, the existence of such a Being might be (possibly) made so evident, as to induce a rational certainty thereof. For to believe such a thing to be true only upon a strong impulse (how certain soever the thing be) is not to assent to it upon a foregoing reason. Nor can any, in that case, tell *why* they believe it, but *that* they believe it. You will not sure think any thing the truer for this, only, that such and such believe it with a sturdy confidence. 'Tis true that the *universality* and *naturalness* of such a persuasion, as pointing us to a common cause thereof, affords the matter of an argument, or is a medium not contemptible nor capable of answer, as hath been said before.

But to be *irresistibly captivated into an assent*, is no *medium* at all ; but an *immediate persuasion* of the thing it self without a reason.

III.

Therefore must it yet be demanded of Atheistical persons, what means, that you yet have not, would you think sufficient to have put this matter out of doubt ? Will you say some kind of very glorious apparitions, becoming the majesty of such a one as this Being is represented, would have satisfied ? But if you know how to phantasie, that such a thing as the Sun, and other luminaries, might have been compacted of a certain peculiar sort of atoms, coming together of their own accord ; without the direction of a wise Agent : yea and

and consist so long, and hold so strangely regular motions ;

How easie would it be to object *that* , with much advantage , against what any temporary apparition, be it as glorious as you can imagine, might seem to signifie to this purpose.

Would dreadful loud voices proclaiming him to be of whose existence you doubt have serv'd the turn ? It is likely, if your fear would have permitted you to use your-wit, you would have had some subtil inventions how by some odd rancounter of angry atoms, the air or clouds might become thus terribly vocal. And when you know already , that they do sometimes salute your ears with very loud sounds (as when it thunders) there is little doubt, but your great wit can devise a way , how possibly such sounds might become articulate. And for the sense and coherent import of what were spoken ; you that are so good at conjecturing how things might casually happen, would not be long in making a guess that might serve that turn also. Except you were grown very dull and barren ; and that fancy that served you to imagine how the whole frame of the universe: and the rare structure of the bodies of animals, yea and even the reasonable soul it self might be all casual productions, cannot now devise how, by chance, a few words (for you do not say you expect long orations) might fall out to be sense, though there were no intelligent speaker.

But

But would strange and wonderful effects that might surprise and amaze you do the business? we may challenge you to try your faculty, and stretch it to the uttermost; and then tell us, what imagination you have formed of any thing more strange and wonderful, than the already extant frame of nature in the whole, and the several parts of it. Will he that hath a while considered the composition of the world; the exact and orderly motions of the Sun, Moon, and Stars; the fabrick of his own body, and the powers of his soul, expect yet a wonder to prove to him there is a God?

But if that be the complexion of your minds, that it is not the *greatness of any work*, but the *novelty and surprisingness* of it, that will convince you; It is not *rational evidence* you seek. Nor is it your Reason, but your idle curiosity you would have gratified; which deserves no more satisfaction than that fond wish, *that one might come from the dead to warn men on earth lest they should come into the place of torment.*

And if such means as these that have been mentioned should be thought necessary, I would ask, are they necessary to every individual person? so as that no man shall be esteemed to have had sufficient means of conviction who hath not with his own eyes beheld some such glorious apparition; or himself heard some such terrible voice, or been the immediate witness or subject of some prodigious wonderful

ful work? Yea, or will the *once* seeing, hearing, or feeling them suffice? Is it not necessary there should be a frequent repetition and renewal of these amazing things, lest the impression wearing off, there be a relapse, and a gradual sliding into an oblivion and unapprehensiveness of that Beings existence, whereof they had, sometime received a conviction. Now if such a continual iteration of these strange things were thought necessary, would they not hereby soon cease to be strange? And then if their strangeness was necessary, by that very thing wherein their sufficiency for conviction is said to consist, they should become useless. Or, if by their frequent variations (which it is possible to suppose) a perpetual amusement be still kept up in the minds of men: and they be always full of consternation and wonder. Doth this temper so much befriend the exercise of Reason? or contribute to the sober consideration of things? As if men could not be rational without being half mad. And, indeed, they might soon become altogether so, by being, but a while, beset with objects so full of terror, as are, by this supposition, made the necessary means to convince them of a Deity. † And were this a fit means of ruling the world, of preserving order among mankind? what business could then be followed? who could intend the affairs of their callings? and unsuitable to the nature of man that should rather tend to destroy his reason or judgment than convince it?

† Now
were not
that a
most im-
proper
course

who

Dr. Spencer
of Prodigies.

who could either be capable of governing, or of being governed while all mens minds should be wholly taken up either in the amazed view or the suspenceful expectation of nought else but strange things? To which purpose much hath been of late, with so excellent reason, discoursed by a worthy Author, that it is needless here to say more. And the aspect and influence of this state of things would be most pernicious upon Religion, that should be most served thereby. And which requires the greatest severity and most peaceful composure of mind to the due managing the exercises of it. How little would that contribute to pious and devout converses with God, that should certainly keep mens minds in a continual commotion and hurry? This course, as our present condition is, what could it do but craze mens understandings, as a too bright and dazzling light causeth blindness, or any over-excelling sensible object destroys the sense; so that we should soon have cause to apply the Arabian Proverb, *Shut the windows that the house may be light.* And might learn to put a sense, not intollerable, upon those passages of some mystical Writers* that God is to be seen in a *Divine cloud or darkness*, as one †; and with closed eyes, as another* speaks (though what was their very sense I will not pretend to tell.)

Besides that, by this means, there would naturally ensue the continual excitation of so vexatious and enthralling passions, so servile and tormenting fears and amazements; as could

* D. Areop.

l. de myster.

Theol. c. i.

† Tis ὁ Θεός

ὁ ὡς ὁ Θεός

* Procl. in

Plat. Theol.

μυστικῶς

ἐν ὧν ὁ Θεός

ἐν ὧν ὁ Θεός

ἐν ὧν ὁ Θεός

ἐν ὧν ὁ Θεός

ἐν ὧν ὁ Θεός

could not but hold the souls of men under a constant and comfortless restraint, from any free and ingenuous access to God, or conversation with him. Wherein the very life of Religion consists. And then to what purpose doth the discovery and acknowledgment of the Deity serve? Inasmuch as it is never to be thought that the existence of God is a thing to be known only that it may be known. But that the end it serves for is *Religion*. A complacential and chearful adoration of him and application of our selves with at once both dutiful and pleasant affections towards him. That were a strange means of coming to know that he is, that should only tend to destroy or hinder the very end it self of that knowledge.

Wherefore all this being considered, it is likely it would not be insisted upon as necessary to our being perswaded of Gods existence, that he should so multiply strange and astonishing things, as that every man might be a daily amazed beholder and witness of them.

And if their *frequency*, and constant iteration be acknowledged *not necessary*, but shall indeed be judged *wholly inconvenient*, more *rare* discoveries of him in the very ways we have been speaking of have not been wanting. What would we think of such an appearance of God as that was upon *Mount Sinai*? when he came down (or caused a sensible Glory to descend) in the sight of all that great people! wherein the several things concurred that were above-mentioned! Let us but suppose such an
appea-

v.

appearance in all the concurrent circumstances of it as that is said to have been. That is, we will suppose an equally great assembly or multitude of people is gathered together, and a solemn forewarning is given and proclaimed among them by appointed Heralds or Officers of State, that, on such a prefixed day, now very nigh at hand, the Divine Majesty and Glory (even his Glory set in Majesty) will visibly appear and shew it self to them. They are most severely enjoyned to prepare themselves and be in readines against that day. Great care is taken to sanctifie the people, and the place, Bounds are set about the designed Theatre of this great appearance. All are strictly required to observe their due and awful distances, and abstain from more audacious approaches and gazings; lest that terrible glory break out upon them and they perish. An irreverent or disrespectful look, they are told, will be mortal to them, or a very touch of any part of this sacred inclosure. In the morning of the appointed day, there are thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the hallowed Mount. The exceeding loud sound of Trumpet proclaims the Lords descent. He descends in fire, the flames whereof envelope the trembling Mount (now floored with a Saphyr pavement clear as the body of heaven.) And ascend into the middle region or (as it is expressed) into the midst or heart of the heavens. The voice of words (a loud and dreadful voice) audible to all that mighty Assembly, in which
were

were 600000 men (probably more than a million of persons) issues forth from amidst that terrible glory pronouncing to them, that *I am Jehovah thy God.*----And thence proceeding to give them precepts, so plain and clear, so comprehensive and full, so unexceptionably just and righteous, so agreeable to the nature of man, and subservient to his good; that nothing could be more worthy the great Creator, or more aptly suitable to such a sort of creatures.

It is very likely, indeed, that such a demonstration would leave no spectator in doubt concerning the existence of God; and would puzzle the Philosophy of the most sceptical Atheist to give an account, otherwise, of the *Phænomenon*. And if such could devise to say any thing that should seem plausible to some very easie half-witted persons that *were not present*, they would have an hard task of it to quiet the minds of those *that were*; or make them believe this was nothing else but some odd conjuncture of certain fiery atoms, that by some strange accident happened into this occursion and conflict with one another; or some illusion of phansie, by which so great a multitude were all at once imposed upon. So as that they only seem'd to themselves to hear and see what they heard and saw not. Nor is it likely they would be very confident of the truth of their own conjecture, or be apt to venture much upon it themselves, having been the eye and ear-witnesses of these things.

O

But

But is it *necessary* this course shall be taken to make the world know there is a God? such an appearance indeed would more powerfully strike sense; but unto sober and considerate Reason were it a greater thing than the making such a world as this? And the disposing this great variety of particular Beings in it, into so exact and elegant an order? And the sustaining and preserving it in the same state through so many ages? Let the vast and unknown extent of the whole, the admirable variety, the elegant shapes, the regular motions, the excellent faculties and powers of that unconceivable number of creatures contained in it, be considered. And is there any comparison between that temporary transient occasional, and this steady permanent and universal discovery of God? Nor (supposing the truth of the History) can it be thought the design of this appearance to these Hebrews was to convince them of the existence of a Deity to be worshipped; when both they had so convincing evidence thereof many ways before; and the other Nations, *that*, which they left, and *those* whither they went, were not without their Religion and worship, such as it was. But to engage them by so majestick a representation thereof, to a more exact observance of his will, now made known. Though, had there been any doubt of the former (as we can hardly suppose they could, before, have more doubted of the being of a God, than that there were men on earth) this might collaterally and besides its chief

chief intention, be a means to confirm them concerning that also : But that it was *necessary for that end*, we have no pretence to imagining. The like may be said concerning other Miracles heretofore wrought, that the intent of them was to justify the Divine Authority of him who wrought them, to prove him sent by God, and so countenance the Doctrine or Message delivered by him. Not that they tended (otherwise than on the by) to prove Gods existence. Much less was this so amazing an appearance needful or intended for that end, and least of all was it necessary, that this should be Gods ordinary way of making it known to men that he doth exist : So as that for this purpose he should often repeat so terrible representations of himself. And how inconvenient it were to mortal men, as well as unnecessary, the astonishment wherewith it possessed that people is an evidence. And their passionate affrighted with thereupon, *Let not God any more speak to us, lest we die*. They apprehended it impossible for them to out-live such an other sight !

And if that so amazing an appearance of the Divine Majesty (sometime afforded) were not necessary, but some way , on the by, useful for the confirming that people in the perswasion of Gods existence, why may it not be useful also for the same purpose even now to us ? Is it that we think that can be less true now which was so gloriously evident to be true four thousand years ago ? Or is it that we

can dis-believe or doubt the truth of the History? what should be the ground or pretence of doubt? If it were a fiction, it is manifest it was feigned by some person that had the use of his understanding, and was not besides himself, as the coherence and contexture of parts doth plainly shew. But would any man not besides himself, designing to gain credit to a forged report of a matter of fact ever say there were 600000 persons present at the doing of it? Would it not rather have been pretended done in a corner? Or is it imaginable it should never have met with contradiction? That none of the pretended by-standers should disclaim the avouchment of it? and say they knew of no such matter? Especially if it be considered that the laws said to be given at that time; chiefly those which were reported to have been written in the two Tables, were not so favourable to vicious inclinations, nor that people so strict and scrupulous observers of them. But that they would have been glad to have had any thing to pretend against the authority of the legislature, if the case could have admitted it. When they discovered, in that, and succeeding time, so violently prone, and unretractable a propension to Idolatry and other wickednesses directly against the very letter of that Law. How welcome and covetable a plea had it been, in their frequent and sometimes almost universal apostasies, could they have had such a thing to pretend that the Law it self that curbed them was a cheat. But

we always find, that though they laboured, in some of their degeneracies, and when they were lapsed into a more corrupted state, to render it more easie to themselves by favourable glosses and interpretations. Yet, even in the most corrupt, they never went about to deny or implead its Divine original; whereof they were ever so Religious asserters as no people under heaven could be more. And the awful apprehension whereof prevailed so far with them, as that care was taken (as is notoriously known) by those appointed to that charge that the very letters should be numbred of the sacred Writings, lest there should happen any the minutest alteration in them. Much more might be said if it were needful for the evincing the truth of this particular piece of History; and its little to be doubted but any man who with sober and impartial reason considers the circumstances relating to it, the easily evidenceable antiquity of the Records whereof this is a part. The certain nearness of the time of writing them to the time when this thing is said to have been done, the great reputation of the Writer even among Pagans, the great multitude of the alledged witnesses and spectacles, the no-contradiction ever heard of. The universal consent and suffrage of that Nation through all times to this day, even when their practice hath been most contrary to the Laws then given; the securely confident and unsuspicious reference of later pieces of sacred Scripture thereto (even some parts of the New

Testament) as a most known and undoubted thing. The long series and tract of time through which that people are said to have had extraordinary and sensible indications of the Divine Presence, (which if it had been false could not in so long a time but have been evicted of falshood.) Their miraculous and wonderful eduction out of *Egypt*: not denied by any, and more obscurely acknowledged by some Heathen Writers, their conduct through the Wilderness, and settlement in *Canaan*; their constitution and form of Polity known for many Ages to have been a Theocracy; their usual ways of consulting God upon all more important occasions. Whosoever I say shall soberly consider these things (and many more might easily occur to such as would think fit to let their thoughts dwell a while upon this subject) will, not only, from some of them think it highly improbable, but, from others of them, plainly impossible that the history of this appearance should have been a contrived piece of falshood. Yea, and though as was said, the view of such a thing with ones own eyes would make a more powerful impression upon our phansie or imagination, yet if we speak of *rational evidence* (which is quite another thing) of the truth of a matter of fact that were of this astonishing nature, I should think it were much (at least if I were credibly told that so manyhundred thousand persons saw it at once, as if I had been the single unaccompanied spectator of it my self. Not to say that

that it were apparently in some respect much greater ; could we but obtain of our selves to distinguish between the pleasing of our curiosity and the satisfying of our reason.

So that, upon the whole, I see not why it may not be concluded, with the greatest confidence, that both the (supposed) existence of a Deity is possible to be certainly known to men on earth, in some way that is suitable to their present state, that there are no means fitter to be ordinary than those we already have, and that more extraordinary additional confirmations are partly therefore not necessary, and partly not wanting.

Again it may be further demanded (as VI. that which may both immediately serve our main purpose, and may also shew the reasonableness of what was last said. Is it sufficiently evident to such Subjects of some great Prince as live remote from the Royal Residence that there is *such a one* now ruling over them ?

To say *no*, is to raze the foundation of civil Government, and reduce it wholly to domestic, by such a Ruler as may ever be in present view. Which yet is, upon such terms, never possible to be preserved also. It is plain many do firmly enough believe that there is a King reigning over them ; who not only never saw the King, but never saw the splendor of his Court, the pomp of his attendance, or it may be, never saw the man that had seen the King ? And is not all dutiful and loyal obedience wont to be challenged, and paid of

such as well as his other Subjects. Or would it be thought a reasonable excuse of disloyalty, that any such persons should say they had never seen the King or his Court? Or a reasonable demand, as the condition of required subjection, that the Court be kept sometime in their Village, that they might have the opportunity of beholding at least some of the *Insignia* of Regality, or more splendid appearances of that Majesty which claims subjection from them? much more would it be deemed unreasonable and insolent, that every Subject should expect to see the face of the Prince every day, otherwise they will not obey nor believe there is any such person. Whereas it hath been judged rather more expedient and serviceable to the continuing the veneration of Majesty (and in a Monarchy of no mean reputation for wisdom and greatness) that the Prince did very rarely offer himself to the view of the people. Surely more ordinary and remote discoveries of an existing Prince and Ruler over them (the effects of his power, and the influences of his government) will be reckoned sufficient even as to many parts of his Dominions, that, possibly through many succeeding generations never had other. And yet how unspeakably less sensible, less immediate, less constant, less necessary, less numerous are the effects and instances of regal humane power, and wisdom than of the Divine; which latter we behold which way soever we look, and feel in every thing we touch or have any sense of,

of, and may reflect upon in our very senses themselves, and in all the parts and powers that belong to us. And so certainly that if we would allow our selves the liberty of serious thoughts, we might soon find it were utterly impossible such effects should ever have been without that only cause. That without its influence, it had never been possible, that we could hear, or see, or speak, or think, or live, or be any thing, nor that any other thing could ever have been, when as the effects that serve so justly to endear and recommend to us civil Government (as peace, safety, order, quiet possession of our rights) we cannot but know are not inseparably and incommunicably appropriate or to be attributed to the person of this or that particular and mortal Governour; but may also proceed from another: yea and the same benefits may (for some short time at least) be continued without any such government at all. Nor is this intended meerly as a rhetorical scheme of speech to beguile or amuse the unwary Reader: But, without arrogating any thing, or attributing more to it, than that it is an (altogether inartificial and very defective, but) true and naked representation of the very case it self as it is. 'Tis professedly propounded as having somewhat solidly argumentative in it. That is that, (whereas there is most confessedly sufficient yet) there is unspeakably less evidence to most people in the world under civil government; that there actually is such a government existent over them; and that

that they are under obligation to be subject to it; than there is of the existence of a Deity, and the (consequent) reasonableness of Religion. If therefore the ordinary effects and indications of *the former*, be sufficient, which have so contingent and uncertain a connexion with their causes (while those which are more extraordinary are so exceeding rare with the most) why shall not the more certain ordinary discoveries of *the latter* be judged sufficient, though the most have not the immediate notice of any such extraordinary appearances as those are which have been before mentioned?

VII.

Moreover, I yet demand further, whether it may be thought possible for any one to have a full rational certainty that another person is a reasonable creature, and hath in him a rational soul, so as to judge he hath sufficient ground and obligation to converse with him, and carry towards him as a man? without the supposition of this, the foundation of all humane society and *civil conversation* is taken away. And what evidence have we of it, whereunto that which we have of the being of God (as the foundation of religious and godly conversation) will not at least be found equivalent?

Will we say that meer *humane* shape is enough to prove such a one a man? A Philosopher would deride us, as the *Stagyrites* Disciples are said to have done the *Platonick man*. But we will not be so nice. We acknowledge it is, if no circumstances concurr (as suddain appearing, vanishing, transformation or the like)

like) that plainly evince the contrary; so far as to infer upon us an obligation, not to be rude, and uncivil; that we use no violence, or carry our selves abusively towards one, that, only thus, appears an humane creature. Yea, and to perform any duty of Justice or Charity towards him within our power, which we owe to a man as a man. As suppose we see him wronged, or in necessity, and can presently right, or relieve him; though he do not, or cannot represent to us more of his case, than our own eyes inform us of. And should an act of Murther be committed upon one whose true humanity was not otherwise evident, would he not be justly liable to the known and common punishment of that offence? Nor could he acquit himself of transgressing the laws of humanity, if he should only neglect any seasonable act of Justice or Mercy towards him, whereof he beholds the present occasion.

But if any one were disposed to cavil or play the Sophister; how much more might be said, even by infinite degrees, to oppose this single evidence of any ones true humanity; than ever was, or can be brought against the entire concurrent evidence we have of the existence of God. It is, here, most manifestly just and equal thus to state the case, and compare the whole evidence we have of the latter, with that one of the former; Inasmuch as that *one alone*, is apparently enough to oblige us to carry towards such a one *as a man*. And if that alone
be

be sufficient to oblige us to acts of Justice or Charity towards man, he is strangely blind that cannot see infinitely more to oblige him to acts of Piety towards God.

But if we would take a nearer and more strict view of this parallel, we would state the general and more obvious aspect of this world, on the one hand, and the external aspect and shape of a man on the other; and should then see the former doth evidence to us an in-dwelling Deity, diffused through the whole, and actuating every part, with incomparably greater certainty, than the latter doth an in-dwelling reasonable soul. In which way we shall find, what will aptly serve our present purpose, though we are far from apprehending any such union of the blessed God with this world, as is between the soul and body of a man. It is manifestly *possible*, to our *understandings*, that there *may be*, and (if any history or testimony of others be worthy to be believed) *certain to experience and sense*, that there, often, *hath been*, the appearance of humane shape, and of agreeable actions, without a *real man*. But it is no way possible such a world as this should have ever been *without God*. That *there is a world*, proves that eternal Being to exist whom we *take to be God*; suppose we it as rude an heap as at first it was, or as we can suppose it; as external appearance represents to us that creature which we *take to be a man*; But *that*, as a certain infallible discovery, necessarily true. *This*, but as a probable

bable and conjectural one, and (though highly probable) not impossible to be false.

And if we will yet descend to a more particular enquiry into this matter, which way will we fully be ascertain'd that this supposed man is truly and really what he seems to be. This we know not how to go about without recollecting, what is the differencing notion we have of a man that he is (*viz.*) a reasonable living creature, or a reasonable soul inhabiting, and united with a body. And how do we think to descry *that*, here, which may answer this common notion we have of a man? Have we any way, besides that discovery, which the acts and effects of reason do make of a rational or intelligent Being? We will look more narrowly, *i. e.* unto somewhat else than his external appearance: and observe the actions that proceed from a more distinguishing principle in him; that he reason's, discourse's, doth business, pursues designs; in short he talks and acts as a reasonable creature. And hence we conclude him to be one, or to have a reasonable soul in him.

And have we not the same way of procedure in the other case. Our first view, or taking notice of a world, full of life and motion, assures us of an eternal active Being, besides it; which *we take to be God*, having now before our eyes a darker shadow of him; only, as the external bulk of the humane body is only the shadow of a man. Which, when we behold it stirring and moving, assures us there is somewhat

what besides that grosser bulk (that of it self could not so move) which we take to be the *soul of a man*. Yet as a principle that can move the body makes not up the entire notion of *this soul*; so an eternal active Being, that moves the matter of the universe, makes not up the full *notion of God*. We are thus far sure in both cases, *i. e.* of some *mover* distinct from what is moved. But we are not yet sure (by what we hitherto see) what the one or the other is. But as, when we have, upon the first sight, *thought* it was a reasonable soul that was acting in the former: or a man (if we will speak according to their sense, who make the soul the man) in order to being sure (as sure as the case can admit) we have no other way, but to consider what belongs, more distinguishingly, to the notion of a man, or of a reasonable soul; and observe how actions and effects, which we have opportunity to take notice of, do answer thereto, or serve to discover that. So when we would be sure, what that eternal active *Being* is (which that it is we are already sure, and) which we have taken to be God, *That I say we may be sure of that also*, we have the same thing to do.

That is to consider what more peculiarly belongs to the entire notion of God (and would even in the judgment of opposers be acknowledged to belong to it) and see whether his works more narrowly inspected do not bear as manifest correspondency to that notion of God, as the works and actions of a man do to the
 notion

notion we have of him. And certainly, we cannot but find they do correspond as much. And that upon a serious and considerate view of the works and appearances of God in the world, having diligently observed, and pondered the vastness and beauty of this universe, the variety, the multitude, the order, the exquisite shapes, the numerous parts, the admirable and useful compofure of particular creatures; and, especially, the constitution and powers of the reasonable soul of man it self, we cannot, surely, if we be not under the possession of a very voluntary and obstinate blindness, and the power of a most vicious prejudice, but acknowledge the making sustaining and governing such a world is as God-like, as worthy of God, and as much becoming him, according to the notion that hath been assigned of him, as at least, the common actions of ordinary men are of a man; or evidence the doer of them to be an humane creature. Yea, and with this advantageous difference, that the actions of a man do evidence an humane creature more uncertainly, and so as it is possible the matter may be otherwise: But these works of God do with so plain and demonstrative evidence discover him the Author of them, that its altogether impossible they could ever otherwise have been done.

Now, therefore, if we have as clear evidence of a Deity as we can have in a way not unsutable to the nature and present state of man, and we can have in a sutable way that which is sufficient.

If

If we have clear and more certain evidence of Gods government over the world, than most men have or can have of the existence of their Secular Rulers; yea, more sure than that there are men on earth, and that thence (as far as the existence of God will make towards it) there is a less disputable ground for *Religious* than for *Civil* Conversation, we may reckon our selves competently well ascertain'd, and have no longer reason to delay the Dedication of a Temple to him upon any pretence of doubt, whether we have an object of worship existing yea or no.

Wherefore we may also by the way take notice how impudent a thing is Atheism, that by the same fulsom and poisonous breath, whereby it would blast Religion, would despoil man of his reason and apprehensive power, even in reference to the most apprehensive thing, would blow away the rights of Princes and all foundations of Policy and Government, and destroy all civil Commerce and Conversation out of the world, and yet blushes not at the attempt of so foul things.

VIII.

And here it may perhaps prove worth our while (though it can be no pleasant contemplation) to pause a little, and make some short reflections upon *the Atheistical Temper and Genius*, so as therein to remark some few more obvious characters of Atheism it self.

And first such, as have not been themselves seized by the infatuation, cannot but judge it a *most unreasonable thing*, a perverse and cross-grain'd

grain'd humour, that so odly writhes and warps the mind of a man, as that it never makes any effort, or offer at any thing against the Deity, but it therein doth (by a certain sort of serpentine involution and retortion) seem to design a quarrel with it self: That is, with (what one would think should be most intimate and natural to the mind of man) his very reasoning power, and the operations thereof. So near indeed was the ancient alliance between God and man (his own Son, his likeness, and living image) and consequently between Reason and Religion; that no man can ever be engaged in an opposition to God and his interest, but he must be equally so to himself and his own. And any one that takes notice how the business is carried by an Atheist, must think in order to his becoming one, his first plot was upon himself. To assassine his own intellectual faculty by a sturdy resolution, and violent imposing on himself not to consider, or use his thoughts, at least with any indifferency, but with a treacherous pre-determination to the part resolved on beforehand. Otherwise it is hard to be imagined, how it should ever have been possible, that so plain and evident proofs of a Deity, as every where offer themselves unto observation; even such as have been here proposed (that do even lie open for the most part to common apprehension, and needed little search to find them out; so that it was harder to determine what not to say than what to say) could be over-look'd.

For what could be more easie and obvious, than, taking notice, that there is somewhat in Being, to conclude that somewhat must be of it self, from whence, whatever is not so, must have sprung. That since there is somewhat effected or made (as is plain, in that some things are alterable, and daily altered which nothing can be that is of it self, and therefore a necessary Being.) Those effects have then had an *active being* for their cause. That since these effects are, partly, such as bear the manifest characters of wisdom and design upon them; and are partly, themselves, wise and designing; therefore they must have had a wisely active and designing cause. So much would plainly conclude the sum of what we have been pleading for; and what can be plainer or doth require a shorter turn of thoughts? At this easie expence might any one that had a disposition to use his understanding to such a purpose, save himself from being an Atheist. And where is the flaw? what Joynt is not firm and strong in this little frame of discourse? which, yet, arrogates nothing to the contriver; for there is nothing in it worthy to be called contrivance: But things do themselves lie thus. And what hath been further said concerning the Perfection and Oneness of this Cause of all things (though somewhat more remote from common apprehension) is what is likely would appear plain and natural to such as would allow themselves the leasure to look more narrowly into such things.

Atheism

Atheism, therefore, seems to import a direct and open hostility, against the most native genuine and facile dictates of common *Reason*.

And being so manifest an enemy to it, we cannot suppose it should be at all befriended by it. For *that* will be always true and constant to it self. Whatsoever false shews of it a bad cause doth sometimes put on. *That* having yet somewhat a more creditable name, and being of a little more reputation in the world, than plain downright madness and folly. And it will appear how little it is befriended, by any thing that can justly, bear that *name*; if we consider the piteous shifts the Atheist makes for his forlorn cause: And what infirm tottering supports, the whole frame of Atheism rests upon. For what is there to be said *for their hypothesis*, or *against the existence of God*, and the duness of Religion?

For there's directly nothing at all. Only a possibility is alledged, things might be as they are, though God did not exist. And if this were *barely possible*, how little doth that signify? where Reason is not injuriously dealt with, it is permitted the liberty of ballancing things equally, and of considering which scale hath most weight. And is he not perfectly blind, that sees not what violence is done to free reason in this matter? Are there not thousands of things, not altogether impossible, which yet he would be concluded altogether out of his wits that should profess to be of the opinion they are or were actually so? And as to the

present case, how facile and unexceptionable, how plain and intelligible is the account that is given of the original of this world, and the things contained in it, by resolving all into a Deity, the Author and maker of them? when as the wild, extravagant suppositions of Atheists, if they were admitted *possible*, are the most *unlikely* that could be devised. So that, if there had been any to have laid wagers, when things were taking their beginning; there is no body that would not have ventured thousands to one that no such frame of things (no not so much as one single Mouse or Flea) would ever have hit. And how desperate hazards the Atheist runs upon this meer supposed possibility, it will be more in our way to take notice by and by.

But besides; That pretended possibility plainly appears none at all. It is impossible *any thing should spring up of it self out of nothing.* That *any thing that is alterable should have been necessarily of it self, such as it now is.* That *what is of it self unactive should be the maker of other things.* That *the Author of all the Wisdom in the world should be himself unwise.* These cannot but be judged most absolute impossibilities to such as do not violence to their own minds; or with whom Reason can be allow'd any the least exercise. Wherefore the Atheistical spirit is most grossly unreasonable in withholding assent, where the most ungainfayable Reason plainly exacts it.

And

And are not the Atheists Cavils as despicably silly *against the Deity*, and (consequently) Religion? Whosoever shall consider their exceptions against some things in the notion of God, eternity, infinity, &c. which themselves in the mean time are forced to place elsewhere, will he not see they talk idly? And as for such other impeachments of his Wisdom, Justice, and Goodness, as they take their ground for from the state of affairs, in some respects, in this present world (many of which may be seen in *Lucretius*, and answered by Dr. *More* in his *Dialogues*.) How inconsiderable will they be, to any one that bethinks himself with how perfect and generous a liberty this world was made, by one that needed it not; who had no design, nor could have inclination, to a fond self-indulgent glorying, and vaunting of his own work; who did it with the greatest facility, and by an easie unexpensive vouchsafement of his good pleasure; not with an operous curiolity, studious to approve it self to the peevish eye of every froward *Momus*, or to the nauseous squeamish gust of every sensual *Epicure*. And to such as shall not confine their mean thoughts to that very clod or ball of earth on which they live. Which, as it is a very small part, may, for ought we know, but be the worst or most abject part of Gods Creation, which yet is full of his Goodness, and hath most manifest prints of his other excellencies besides; as hath been observed. Or, that shall not look upon the present state of things.

as the eternal state, but upon *this world* only as an antichamber to *another*, which shall abide in most unexceptionable perfection for ever.

How fond and idle, I say, will all such cavils appear to one that shall but thus use his thoughts, and not think himself bound to measure his conceptions of God, by the uncertain rash dictates of men born in the dark, and that talk at random: Nor shall affix any thing to him which plain Reason doth not dictate, or which he doth not manifestly assume or challenge to himself. But that because a straw lies in my way, I would attempt to overturn heaven and earth, what raging phrensie is this?

Again it is a *base abject temper*, speaks a mind sunk and lost in carnality, and that having dethron'd and abjur'd Reason, hath abandon'd it self to the hurry of vile appetite, and sold its liberty, and sovereignty, for the insipid gulfless pleasures of sense: An unmanly thing. A degrading of ones self. For if there be no God, what am I? A piece of moving thinking clay, whose ill compacted parts will shortly fly asunder, and leave no other remains of me, than what shall become the prey and the triumph of worms!

'Tis a *sad, mopish, disconsolate Temper*, Cut off, and quite banishes all manly rational joy. All that might spring from the contemplation of the Divine Excellencies and Glory, shining in the works of his hands. Atheism clothes the world in black, draws a
dark

dark and dusky cloud over all things. Doth more to damp and stifle all relishes of *intellectual* pleasure, than it would of *sensible*, to extinguish the Sun. What is this world (if we should suppose it still to subsist) without God? How grateful an entertainment is it to a pious mind to behold his glory stamp'd on every creature sparkling in every providence; and by a firm and rational Faith to believe (when we cannot see) how all events are conspiring to bring about the most happy and blissful state of things! The Atheist may make the most of this world; he knows no pleasure, but what can be drawn out of its dry breasts, or found in its cold embraces: Which yields as little satisfaction, as he finds whose arms aiming to inclose a dear friend do only clasp a stiff and clammy carcass. How uncomfortable a thing is it to him, that having neither power nor wit to order things to his own advantage or content, but finds himself liable to continual disappointments, and the rencounter of many an unsuspected cross accident, hath none to repose on that is wiser and mightier than himself? But when he finds he cannot command his own affairs, to have the settled apprehension of an Almighty Ruler that can with the greatest certainty do it for us, the best way; and will, if we trust him: How satisfying and peaceful a repose doth this yield! And how much the rather, inasmuch as that filial unsuspecting confidence and trust, which naturally tends to and begets that calm and quiet rest,

is the very condition required on my part ; and that the chief thing I have to do , to have my affairs brought to a good pass , is to commit them to his management. And my only care to be careful in nothing. The Atheist hath nothing to mitigate the greatness of this loss, but that he knows not what he loses , which is an allay that will serve but a little while. And when the most unsupportable pressing miseries befall him, he must in bitter agonies groan out his wretched soul, without hope ; and sooner die under his burthen, than say, *Where is God my Maker ?* At the best, he exchanges all the pleasure, and composure of mind, which certainly accompanies a dutiful son-like trust, submission and resignation of our selves, and all our concernments, to the disposal of fatherly wisdom and love, for a sour and sullen succumbency to an *irresistable fate*, or hard necessity, against which he sees it's vain to contend. So that at the best he only not rages, but tastes nothing of consolation ; whereof his spirit is as incapable, as his desperate affairs are of redress. And if he have arrived to that measure of fortitude, as not to be much discomposed with the lighter crosses which he meets with in this short time of life, what a dreadful cross is it that he must die ! How dismal a thing is a certain never to be avoided death ! Against which as Atheism hath not, surely, the advantage of Religion in giving protection : So it hath greatly the disadvantage, in affording no relief. What would the joy

joy be worth in that hour, that arises from *the hope of the glory to be revealed?* And is the want of that the total sum of the Atheists misery at this hour? What heart can conceive the horror of that one thought if darted in upon him at that time (as 'tis strange, and more sad, if it be not) *what becomes now of me, if there prove to be a God!* where are my mighty demonstrations upon which one may venture? and which may cut off all fear and danger of future calamity in this dark unknown state I am going into? shall I be the next hour *nothing or miserable?* Or, if I had *opportunity*, shall I not have sufficient *cause* to proclaim (as * once one of the same fraternity did, by way of warning, to a surviving companion)---A story I Great and a Terrible God! a Great and a confidently re- Terrible God! A Great and a Terrible God! fer to, be- ing of late

date, and having had a certain and circumstantial account of it, by one (a very sober and intelligent person) who had the Relation from him to whom that dreadful warning was given, by his then lately deceased associate. But I shall not by a particular relation gratify the scorn of this sort of men, who taking advantage from the (sometimes deceived) credulity of well-meaning people, have but that way of answering all such things by the one word which served once, so learnedly, to confute *Bellarmin.*

I only add, 'Tis a *most strangely mysterious and unaccountable Temper.* Such as is hardly reducible to its proper causes. So that it would puzzle any mans enquiry to find out, or even give but probable conjectures how so odd and preternatural a disaffection as Atheism should ever come to have place in an humane mind.

It

It must be concluded a very complicated disease, and yet when our thoughts have fastned upon several things that have an aspect that way as none of them alone could infer it, so it is hard to imagine, how all of them, together, should ever come to deprave reasonable nature to such a degree.

'Tis, first, most astonishingly marvellous (though it's apparent this distemper hath its rise from an *ill will*) that any man should so much as *will*, that which the Atheist hath obtained of himself to *believe*, or *affect to be* what *he is*.

The commonness of this vile disposition of *will*, doth but forrily shift off the wonder, and only with those slight and trifling minds that have resigned the office of judging things to their (more active) senses, and have learned the easie way of waving all enquiries about common things, or resolving the account into this only, that they are to be seen every day. But if we allow'd our selves to consider *this matter* soberly, we would soon find that howsoever it most plainly appear a very common plague upon the spirits of men (and universal till a cure be wrought) to say by way of wish, *No God*, or I would there were none: Yet by the good leave of them who would thus easily excuse the thing, the commonness of this horrid evil doth so little diminish, that it increases the wonder. Things are more strange as their causes are more hardly assignable. What should the reason be, that a Being of so incompa-

comparable excellency, so amiable and alluring glory, purity, love, and goodness is become undesirable and hateful to his own creatures ! That such creatures , his more immediate peculiar off-spring, stamp'd with his likeness, the so vivid resemblances of his own spiritual immortal nature , are become so wickedly unnatural towards their common and most indulgent Parent ! what to wish him dead ! to envie life and being , to him from whom they have received their own ! 'Tis strange as it is *without a cause*. But they have offended him, are in a revolt, and sharply conscious of fearful demerits. And who would not wish to live ? and to escape so unsupportable revenge ? 'Tis still strange we would ever offend such a one ! Wherein were his Laws unequal ? his Government grievous ? But since we have ; this only is pertinent to be said by them that have no hope of forgiveness, that are left to despair of reconciliation, why do we fort our selves with Devils ? We profess not to be such.

Yea, but we have no hope to be forgiven the sin we do not leave , nor power to leave the sin which now we love. This , instead of lessening, makes the wonder a miracle ! O wretched forlorn creature ! wouldst thou have God out of being for this ? (I speak to thee who dost not yet profess to believe there is no God , but dost only with it.) The sustainer of the world ! The common Basis of all Being ! dost thou know what thou sayest ? Art thou not wishing thy self and all things into nothing ? This, rather

ther than humble thy self, and beg forgiveness ? This ! rather than become, again, an holy, pure, obdient creature, and again, blessed in him who first made thee so !

It can never cease, I say, to be a wonder, we never ought to cease wondering that ever this befel the nature of man, to be prone to wish such a thing that there were no God !

But this is, 'tis true, the too common case ; and if we will only have what is more a rarity go for a wonder ; How amazing then is it, that if any man *would even never so fain* ; he ever can make himself believe there is no God ! and shape his horrid course according to that most horrid misbelief ! By what fatal train of causes is this ever brought to pass ! Into what can we devise to resolve it ?

Why such as have arrived to this pitch are much addicted to the pleasing of their senses ; and this they make their business ; so as that, for a long time they have given themselves no leasure to mind objects of another nature ; especially that should any way tend to disturb them in their easie course : Till they are (gradually) fallen into a forgetful sleep, and the images of things are worn out with them ; that had only more slightly touch'd their minds before. And being much used to go by the suggestions of sense, they believe not what they neither see nor feel.

This is somewhat, but does not reach the mark ; for there are many very great sensualists (as great as they at least) who never arrive

rive hither, but firmly avow it that they believe a Deity, whatsoever mistaken notion they have of him; whereupon they imagine to themselves impunity in their vicious course.

But these, it may be said, have so disaccustomed themselves to the exercise of their reason, that they have no disposition to use their thoughts about any thing above the sphere of sense; and have contracted so dull and sluggish a temper, that they are no fitter to mind or employ themselves in any speculations that tend to beget in them the knowledge of God, than any man is for discourse or business when he is fast asleep.

So indeed in reason one would expect to find it, but the case is so much otherwise, when we consider particular instances, that we are the more perplex'd and intangled in this enquiry, by considering how agreeable it is that the matter should be thus, and observing that it proves oft-times not to be so: Inasmuch that reason and experience seem herein, not to agree, and hence we are put again upon new conjectures what the immediate cause of this strange malady should be.

For did it proceed purely from a sluggish temper of mind, unapt to reasoning and discourse; the more any were so, the more dispos'd they should be to Atheism; Whereas, every one knows that, multitudes of persons of dull and slow minds to any thing of ratiocination would rather you should burn their houses, than tell them they did not believe in God; and would presently tell you, it were pitty

pitty he should live, that should but intimate a doubt whether there were a God or no. Yea, and many, somewhat more intelligent, yet in this matter, are shie of using their Reason, and think it unsafe, if not profane, to go about to prove, that there is a God, lest they should move a doubt, or seem hereby to make a question of it. And, in the mean time, while they offer not at reasoning, they, more meanly, supply that want, after a sorry fashion, from their education, the tradition of their fore-fathers common example, and the universal profession and practice of some Religion, round about them; and it may be only take the matter for granted, because they never heard such a thing was ever doubted of, or called in question in all their lives.

Whereas, on the other hand, they who incline to Atheism are, perhaps, some of them the greatest pretenders to Reason. They rely little upon authority of former times and ages, upon vulgar principles and maxims, but are vogue great masters of Reason, diligent searchers into the mysteries of nature, and can philosophize (as sufficiently appears) beyond all imagination. But 'tis hoped it may be truly said for the vindication of Philosophy, and them that profess it, that modern Atheists have little of that to glory in, and that their chief endowments are only their skill to please their senses, and a faculty with a pittiful sort of drollery to tincture their cups, and add a grace to their (otherwise) dull and flat conversation.

Yet

Yet all this howsoever being considered, there is here but little advance made to the finding out whence Atheism should proceed: For, that want of reason should be thought the cause, what hath been already said seems to forbid. That many ignorant persons seem possessed with a great awe [of a Deity from which divers more knowing have delivered themselves. And yet neither doth the former signify any thing (in just interpretation) to the disrepute of Religion. For truth is not the less true, for that some hold it they know not how or why. Nor doth the latter make to the reputation of Atheism, inasmuch as men otherwise rational may sometimes learnedly dote. But it confirms us that Atheism is a strange thing, when its extraction and pedigree are so hardly found out, and it seems to be directly of the lineage, neither of knowledge nor ignorance, neither sound Reason nor perfect Dotage.

Nor doth it at all urge to say, and why may we not as well stand wondering whence the apprehension of a God, and an addictedness to Religion should come, when we find them peculiar, neither to the more knowing, nor the more ignorant. For they are apparently and congruously enough to be derived from somewhat common to them both. The impression of a Deity universally put upon the minds of all men (which Atheists have made a shift to raze out or obliterate to that degree as to render it illegible) and that cultivated by the exercise of Reason, in some, and in others, less capable

pable of that help, somewhat confirmed by education and the other accessaries mentioned above.

Therefore is this matter still most mysteriously intricate that there should be one temper and perswasion agreeing to two so vastly different sorts of persons, while yet we are to seek for a cause (except what is most tremendous to think of) from whence it should proceed, that is common to them both. And here is in short the sum of the wonder, that any, not appearing very grossly unreasonable in other matters, (which cannot be deny'd even of some of the more sensual and lewder sort of Atheists) should, in so plain and important a case, be so, beyond all expression, absurd. That they, without scruple, are pleased to think like other men, in matters that concern and relate to common practice, and wherein they might more colourably and with less hazard, go out of the common road. And are *here only*, so dangerously and madly extravagant. *Theirs* is therefore a particular madness, the *Dementia quoad hoc*. So much the stranger thing, because they whom it possesses, do only in this one case put off themselves, and are like themselves, and other men in all things else. If they reckon'd it a glory to be singular they might (as hath been plainly shewn) more plausibly profess it as a principle, *that they are not bound to believe the existence of any secular Ruler* (and consequently not be subject to any) *longer than they see him*, and so subvert all Policy and Govern-

Government; or pretend an exemption from all obligation to any act of justice, or to forbear the most injurious violence towards any man, *because they* are not infallibly certain any one they see is an humane wight, and so abjure all morality as they already have so great a part; than offer with so fearful hazard to assault the Deity (of whose existence if they would but think a while, they might be most infallibly assured, or go about to subvert the foundations of Religion. Or, if they would get themselves glory by great adventures, or show themselves brave men, by expressing a fearless contempt of Divine Power, and Justice. This fortitude is not humane. These are without the compass of its object. *As Inundations, Arist. Eth. Earthquakes, &c.* are said to be, unto which, *l. 3.* that any one should fearlessly expose himself, can bring no profit to others, nor therefore glory to him.

In all this harangue of discourse the design hath not been to fix upon any true cause of *Atheism*, but to represent it a strange thing; And an Atheist a Prodigy, a Monster amongst mankind. A dreadful spectacle, forsaken of the common aids afforded to other men, hung up in chains, to warn others; and let them see what an horrid creature, man may make himself by voluntary aversion from God that made him.

In the mean time they upon whom this dreadful plague is not fallen, may plainly see before them, the object of that worship which

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is

is imported by a Temple, *An existing Deity, a God to be worshipped.*

Unto whom we shall yet see further reason to design, and consecrate a Temple for that end (and even our selves to become such) when we have considered (what comes next to be spoken of) his *Conversableness with men.*

C H A P. VI.

What is intended by Gods conversableness with men, considered only as fundamental and presupposed to a Temple. An account of the Epicurean Deity. Its existence impossible any way to be proved if it did exist. Nor can be affirmed to any good intent. That such a Being is not God. That the absolute perfection proved of God represents him a fit object of Religion. From thence more particularly deduced to this purpose. His Omniscieny, Omnipotency, Unlimited Goodness, Immensity. Curcellæus's Arguments again this last considered.

- I. **N**OR is the thing here intended less necessary to a Temple and Religion, than what we have hitherto been discoursing of. For such a sort of Deity as should shut up it self, and be reclus'd from all converse with men, would leave us as disfurnish'd of an object of Religion, and would render a Temple on earth as vain a thing, as if there were none at all.
- It

It were a Being not to be worshipped, nor with any propriety, to be called God more (in some respect less) than an image or statue. We might, with as rational design, worship, for a God, what were scarce worthy to be called the shadow of a man, as dedicate Temples to a wholly unconvertable Deity: That is, such a one as not only *will not* vouchsafe to converse with men; but, that *cannot* admit it. Or whose nature were altogether incapable of such converse.

For that measure and latitude of sense must be allowed unto the expression [convertableness with men] as that it signifie both *capacity* and *propension* to such converse. That God is both, by his *Nature*, capable of it, and hath a gracious inclination of *will* thereunto. Yea and we will add (what is also not without the compass of our present theam, nor the import of this word whereby we generally express it) that he is not only inclined to converse with men, but that he actually doth it. As we call him a conversable person that upon all besitting occasions doth freely converse with such as have any concern with him.

It will indeed be necessary to distinguish Gods converse with men, into,

That which he bath in common with all men: so as to sustain them in their beings, and some way, influence their actions (in which kind he is also conversant with all his creatures) and

That which he more peculiarly bath with good men.

Q 2

And

And, though the consideration of the latter of these will belong to the discourse concerning *his Temple it self*, which he hath with and in them; yet it is the former, only, we have now to consider, *as presupposed thereto, and as the ground thereof*. Together with *his gracious propension* to the latter also.

As the great Apottle, in his discourse at *Athens*, lays the same ground for acquaintance with God (which he intimates should be set afoot and continued in another sort of Temple than is made with hands) *that he hath given to all breath, and being, and all things*, and that he is near and ready (whence they should therefore seek him, if haply they might feel after him, and find him out) in order to further converse.

And here, our business will have the less in it of labour and difficulty; for that we shall have little else to do, besides only the applying of principles already asserted (or possibly the more express adding of some or other that were imply'd in what hath been said) to this purpose.

From which principles it will appear, that he not only can, but that (in the former sense) he doth converse with men, and is graciously inclin'd thereto (in the latter.) And yet because the former is more *deeply fundamental*, as whereon all depends, and that the *act* of it is not deny'd for any other reason than an imagined *impossibility*; that is, 'tis not said he *doth not* sustain and govern the world, upon any other pretence, but that he *cannot* (as being

being inconsistent with his nature and felicity,) This we shall therefore more directly apply our selves to evince, *That his nature doth not disallow it, but necessarily includes an aptitude thereto.*

Nor yet though it maybe a less laborious work than the former that we have dispatched, is it altogether needless to deal somewhat more expressly in this matter. Inasmuch as what opposition hath been made to Religion in the world hath for the most part been more expressly directed against this ground of it. I say more expressly; For indeed by plain and manifest consequence it impugns that also of Gods existence; That is through this, it strikes at the other. For surely (howsoever any may arbitrarily, and with what impropriety and latitude of speech they please, bestow titles and elogies here or there) That *being* is not *God*, that *cannot* converse with men; supposing them such as what purely and peculiarly belongs to the nature of man would bespeak them. So that they who have imagined such a being, and been pleased to call it God, have at once said and unsaid the same thing. That Deity was but a creature, and that, only, of their own fancy; and they have by the same breath blown up and blasted their own bubble, made it seem something, and signifie nothing. Have courted it into being, and rioted it again quite out of it. In their conceit created it a God, in their practice a meer nullity. And it equally serv'd their turn, and as much favoured the design of

Q 3

being

being wicked, to acknowledge only a God they could imagine and dis-imagine at their own pleasure; as to have acknowledged none at all. It could do no prejudice to their affairs to admit of this fictitious Deity that they could make be *what*, or *where* they pleased. That should affect ease and pleasure, and (lest his pleasures and theirs should interfere) that they could confine to remote territories, and oblige to keep at an obedient and untroublesome distance. Nor, though no imagination could be more madly extravagant, than that of a God no way concerned in the forming and governing of the world; and, notwithstanding whom men might take their liberty to do what they listed; yet, as hath been observed long ago, that no opinion was ever so monstrously absurd, as not to be owned by some of the Philosophers) hath not this wanted patronage, and even among them who have obtained to be esteemed (not to say idoliz'd) under that name.

Which would be seen if it were worth the while to trouble the Reader with an account of *the Epicurean Deity*. As it can only be with this design, that the representation may render it (as it cannot but do) ridiculous, to sober men; and discover to the rest the vanity of their groundless, and self-contradicting hope (still too much fostered in the breasts of not a few) who promise themselves impunity in the most licentious course of wickedness, upon the security only of this their own idle dream.

That

That is, that if there be a God (which they reckon it not so plausible flatly to deny) he is a Being of either so dull and phlegmatick a temper that he *cannot* be concerned in the actions and affairs of men, or so soft and easie that he *will not*.

But, because his good will alone was not so safely to be rely'd on, it was thought the seculer way not to let it be in his power, to intermeddle with their concernments. And therefore being to frame their own God to their own turn. Thus the matter was, of old, contriv'd.

First, great care was taken that he be set at a distance remote enough; that he be complemented out of this world, as a place too mean for his reception, and unworthy such a presence. They being indeed unconcerned where he had his residence. So it were not too near them. So that a confinement of him somewhere was thought altogether necessary.

Ac designare quidem non

licet quibus in locis Dii degant. Cum ne noster quidem hic mandus, digna sit illorum sedes. Phil. Epicur. Syntag.

Secondly, and then, with the same pretence of great observance and respect, it is judg'd too great a trouble to him, and inconsistent with the felicity of his nature and being, that he should have given himself any diversion or disturbance, by making the world. From the care and labour whereof he is with all ceremony to be excused. It being too painful and la-

Ἐπὶ τῇ τῇ -
 εἰς τοιαύτας,
 καὶ ταύτας
 ἵνα ἡ πόλις
 ἡμῶν ᾖ τῇ

τοιαύτης, λαμβανόντων ἡ δὲ θεῶν εὐσέως πρὸς ταῦτα μετὰ μὴ ἀποταγίδου, ἀλλὰ ἀδελφότητος, διατηρούντων, ἡ δὲ τῇ πόλει μακαριότητι. *Laertius, l. 10. Epist. Epicur. ad Pythocli.*—*Quæ molitio, quæ ferramenta, qui velles, quæ machinæ, qui ministri tanti muneris fuerunt? Vell. apud Cicer. de natura Deorum.*

Nihil beatus nihil omnino bonis omnibus affluens excogitari potest. Nihil enim agit, nullis occupationibus est

Whence also, thirdly, he was with the same reason to be excused of all the care and incumbrance of government (as indeed, what right or pretence could he have to the government of a world that chose him not, which is not his inheritance, and which he never made?) But all is very plausibly shadowed over with a great appearance of reverence and veneration, with magnificent eulogies of his never inter-
*implicatus, &c. Id. Ὅταν, τίμω θεῶν εὐσέως μὴ λατρυμῇ ἀπλόωνται. Laert. ibid. Itaque imposuistis cervicibus nostris sempiternum aominum, quem, dies & noctes, timevemus. Quis enim non timeat omnia providentem, & cogitantem, & animadvertentem, & omnia ad se pertinere putantem, cariosum & plenum negotii Deum? Vell. ubi supra. Humana ante oculos sæpe cum vita jacere. In tervis oppressa gravi sub religione Primam Græci homo mortalis (meaning Epicurus the first champion of Irreligion.) *Luctet.* To which purpose, besides what we have in *Laert.* τὸ μακρότερον ἢ ἀρδύτερον, ἢ αὐτὸ ἀνάγκη ἔχει, ἢ ἄλλω παρίχει ὅτι ἢ ἐργαίει, ἢ κέρει συνήκει, ἢ ἀδινῇ γὰρ πᾶν τὸ τοιοῦτον, l. 10. Much more is collected in the *Syntagma.* Nam & præstans Deorum natura hominum pietate colebatur, cum æterna esset & beatissima. Habet enim venerationem justam quicquid excellit. Et metus omnis, a vi atque ira Deorum pulsus esset. Intelligitur enim a beata immortalique natura, & iram & gratiam segregari. Quibus remotis, nulles a superis impendere metus &c. *Sc&. 1. cap. 3. An & mundum fecit, & in mundo homines ut ab hominibus colebatur? At quid Deo cultus hominum confert, beato, & nulla re indigenti? Sc&. 2. cap. 3.**

rupted

rupted felicity. Whence also it is made a very great crime not to free *even the Divine Nature it self*, from business. Though yet the true ground and root of this Epicurean Faith doth, sometime more apparently discover it self; even *an impatiency of the Divine Government*, and a regret of that irksom bondage which the acknowledgment of a *Deity that were to be feared by men* would infer upon them.

And therefore fourthly, he is further expressly asserted to be such as need not be feared; as cares not to be worshipped, as with whom neither anger nor favour hath any place.

So that nothing more of duty is owing to him than a certain kind of arbitrary veneration, which we give to any thing, or person that we apprehend to excel us, and to be in some respect better than our selves. An observance meerly upon courtesie. But obedience and subjection to his Government, fear of his displeasure, expectation of his favour and benefits have no place left them. We are not obliged to worship him as one with whom we have any concern, and do owe him no more homage than to the great *Mogul*, or the *Cham* of *Tartary*, and indeed are less liable to his severity, or capable of his favours than theirs; for of theirs we are in some remote possibility, of his in none at all. In one word, all converse between him and man *on his part by providence*, and *on ours by Religion*, is quite cut off. Which evidently appears (from what hath been already collected out of his own words

words and theirs who pretended to speak that so adored Authors mind and sense) to be the scope and sum of the Epicurean doctrine in this matter, and was indeed observed to be so long ago ; by one that we may suppose to have had better opportunity and advantages to know it, than we : Who discoursing that a man cannot live pleasantly, according to the principles of *Epicurus*. And that according to his doctrine beasts are more happy than men ; plainly gives this reason why he says so, *viz.* that the Epicureans took away providence. And that the design of their discoursing concerning God was that we might not fear him.

Καὶ τοὶ οὖν
μὴ ἐν τῇ
ἀποδείξει
τῷ θεῷ τὴν
ἀνθρώπων

ἐπιβίωσιν, ἰσχυρίζονται ὡς ἡλικίᾳ χρησταὶ πλέον ἔχοντες οὐ φοβήσονται ἢ θανάτου ἢ πόνου καὶ ἰσχυρὸν ζῆλον. ἐπεὶ δὲ τὰς αἰτίας τῶν περὶ θεῶν λόγων, τὸ μὴ φοβήσονται θανάτου, ἀλλὰ πᾶσι τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, βασιλεύοντες ὅμως τούτοις, &c. *Plat.*

Unto which purpose also much more may be seen in the same Author elsewhere, when he more directly pleads (among divers more philosophical subjects) on behalf of Religion against the Epicurean Doctrine which he saith they leave to us in *word* and *shew*, but, by their principles, take away *in deed*, as they do nature, and the soul, &c.

*Adversus
Colotem*

Πᾶς ὁ ἀπὸ
λαίπυρτος φύ-
σιν ἐκ φύ-
χων καὶ ζῶντων οὐκ ὀφείλει, ὡς ἀνθρώπων, ὡς θεῶν, οὐκ ἀποσκευάζειν, ἡμᾶς καὶ λόγων,

καὶ τῶν πάντων καὶ ἀποσκευάζειν καὶ ἐννοεῖται, ὡς αἰσθητικῶν καὶ τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ἀναισθητῶν. Unto which purpose is that also in Tully. *At etiam de sanctitate, de pietate adversus Deos libros scripsit Epicurus. At quomodo in his loquitur? ut Coruncanium aut Scævulam Pontifices maximos te audire dicas non eum, qui subtraheret omnem funditus religionem: Nec manibus ut Xerxes, sed rationibus Tempia Deorum & aras averterit. De natura Deorum.*

It is then out of question that the Doctrine of *Epicurus* utterly takes away all intercourse between God and man. Which yet were little worth our notice or consideration: nor would it answer any valuable end or purpose to revive the mention of such horrid opinions, or tell the world what such a one said or thought two thousand years ago. If their grave had been faithful to its trust and had retain'd their filthy poisonous savour within its own unhallowed Cell.

But since (against what were so much to have been desired, that their womb might have been their Grave) their Grave becomes their womb, where they are conceived and formed anew, and whence by a second birth they spring forth afresh to the great annoyance of the world, the debauching and endangering of mankind. And that it is necessary some remedy be endeavour'd of so mortal an evil, it was also convenient to run it up to its original. And contend against it as in its primitive state and vigour.

Wherefore this being a true (though it be a very short) account of the Epicurean God; resulting all into this shorter sum, *That he is altogether unconvertable with men* (and such therefore as cannot inhabit their Temple, and for whom they can have no obligation or rational design to provide any) it will be requisite in reference hereto, and suitable to our present scope and purpose, severally to evince these things.

1. That

1. That the existence of such a Being as this were impossible ever to be proved unto men, if it did exist.
2. That, Being supposed, without any good ground; 'tis equally unimaginable that the supposition of it can intend any valuable or good end.
3. That this supposed Being cannot be God, and is most abusively so called; as hereby, the true God, the cause and author of all things is intended to be excluded.
4. That it belongs to, and may be deduced from the true notion of God, which hath been given (and proved by parts of a really existent Being) that he is such as can converse with men.

For the first, That there is *no* way to prove the existence of such a Being, is evident. For what ways of proving it can be thought of, which the supposition it self doth not forbid, and reject? Is it to be proved by Revelation? But that supposes converse with men, and destroys what it should prove, *that such a Being, having no converse with men doth exist.* And where is that Revelation? Is it written or unwritten? Or who are its vouchers? Upon what authority doth it rest? who was appointed to inform the world in this matter? was Epicurus himself the common Oracle? why did he never tell men so? did he ever pretend to have seen any of these his vogue'd Gods? No, they are confessed not to be liable to our sense

ſenſe any more than the *Inane* it ſelf. And what Miracles did he ever work to confirm the truth of his Doctrines in this matter? which ſure was reaſonably to be expected from one who would gain credit to dictates ſo contrary to the common ſentiments of the reſt of mankind; And that were not to be proved any other way. And what other way can be deviſed? can it admit of rational demonſtration? what ſhall be the medium? ſhall it be from the cauſe? But what cauſe can (or ever did) he or his followers aſſign of God? Or from effects? And what ſhall *they* be? When the matter of the whole univerſe is ſuppoſed ever to have been of it ſelf, and the particular frame of *every* thing made thereof to have reſulted only of the caſual coalition of the parts of that matter? And no real Being is ſuppoſed beſides? or ſhall it be that their Idea which they have of God includes exiſtence as ſo belonging to him that he cannot but exiſt. But by what right do they affix ſuch an Idea to their petite and fictitious Deities? How will they prove their Idea true? or are we bound to take their words for it? Yea it is eaſily proved falſe and repugnant to it ſelf, while they would have that to be neceſſarily exiſtent (as they muſt if they will have it exiſtent at all) unto which in the mean time they deny the other perfections which neceſſary exiſtence hath been proved to include. But how vain and idle trifling is it, arbitrarily, and by a random fancy to imagine any thing what we pleaſe, and attributing of
our

our own special grace and favour necessary existence to it, thence to conclude that it doth exist, only because we have been pleased to make that belong to the notion of it? What so odd and uncouth composition can we form any conception of which we may not make exist at this rate?

But the notion of God is not arbitrary, but is natural, proleptical, and common to men, imprest upon the minds of all: whence they say it ought not to be drawn into controversy. What? the Epicurean notion of him? we shall enquire further into that anon. And in the mean time, need not doubt to say, any man might, with as good pretence, imagine the ridiculous sort of Gods described in *Cicero's* Ironical supposition, and affirm them to exist as they those they have thought fit to feign, and would impose upon the belief of men. And when they have fancied these to exist, is not that a mighty proof that they indeed do so?

Deos, Strabones, pectus, nectum habentes, Silos, Flaccos, Frontones, Capitones, de Natura Deorum, l. 1.

But that, which for the present we alledge, is, that, supposing their notion were never so absolutely universal and agreeing with the common sentiments of all other men, they have, yet, precluded themselves of any right to argue, from its commonness, to the existence of the thing it self. Nor can they, upon their principles, form an argument thence, that shall conclude or signify any thing to this purpose. None can be drawn hence, that will conclude immediately, and, it self, reach the mark; without the addition of some further thing, which

which so ill sorts with the rest of their Doctrine that it would subvert the whole frame. That is, it follows not, that because men generally hold that there is a God, that therefore there is one, otherwise than as that consequence can be justified by this plain and irrefragable proof. That no reason can be devised of so general an agreement, or of that so common an impression upon the minds of men, but this only; that it must have proceeded from one common cause, *viz.* God himself; who having made man, so prime a part of his Creation, hath stamp't with his own signature this nobler piece of his workmanship; and purposely made and fram'd him to the acknowledgment and adoration of his Maker.

But how shall they argue so, who while they acknowledge a God, deny man to be his creature? and will have him and all things be by chance, or without dependence on any Maker? what can an impression infer to this purpose that comes no one can tell whence or how? But is plainly denied to be from him, whose being they would argue from it?

The observation of so common an apprehension in the minds of men, might (upon their supposition) beget much *wonder*, but no *knowledge*; and may perplex men much, how such a thing should come to pass, without making them any thing the wiser, and would infer astonishment sooner than a good conclusion: or than it would solidly prove any important truth.

And

And do they think they have salved the business, and given us a satisfying account of this matter, by telling us, *this impression is from nature* (as they speak.) It were to be wish'd some of them had told us, or could yet tell us, what they meant by nature. Is it any intelligent principle? Or was it guided by any such? If yea, whence came this impression, but from God himself? For surely an intelligent Being, that could have this universal influence upon the minds of all men, is much liker to be God than the imaginary entities they talk of, that are bodies and no bodies, have bloud and no bloud, members and no members, are some where, and no where; or if they be any where, are confined to some certain places remote enough from our world; with the affairs whereof, or any other, they cannot any way concern themselves without quite undoing and spoiling their felicity. If they say no, and that nature which put this stamp upon the minds of men, is an utterly unintelligent thing, nor was ever governed by any thing wiser than it self. Strange! that blind and undefigning nature, should, without being prompted, become thus ignorantly officious to these idle voluptuary Godlings; and should so effectually take course they might be known to the world, who no way ever obliged it; nor were ever like to do! But to regress a little, fain I would know what is this thing they call nature? Is it any thing else than the course and inclination of conspiring Atoms, which
singly

singly are not pretended to bear any such impression; but as they luckily club and hit together in the composition of an humane soul; by the meerest and strangest chance that ever hapned? But would we ever regard what they say whom we believe to speak by chance? were it to be supposed that characters and words serving to make up some proposition or other, were by some strange agitation of wind and waves impress and figured on the sand; would we if we really believed the matter came to pass only by such an odd casualty; think that proposition any whit the truer for being there, or take this for a demonstration of its truth; any more than if we had seen it in a Ballad? Because men have casually come to think so, therefore there are such beings (to be called Gods) between whom, and them, there never was, or shall be any intercourse or mutual concern. It follows as well as that because the staff stands in the corner, the morrow will be a rainy day. The dictates of nature are indeed most regardable things, taken as expressions of his mind, or emanations from him who is the Author and God of Nature. But abstracted from him, they are and signifie as much as a beam cut off from the body of the Sun. Or a person that pretends himself an Ambassadour without credentials.

Indeed (as is imported in the words noted *Platarch.* from that grave Pagan a little before) the principles of these men destroy quite nature it self as well as every thing of Religion. And leave

us the names and shew of them, but take away the things themselves. In sum, Though there be no such impression upon the minds of men as that which they talk of; yet if there were, no such thing can be inferr'd from it, as they would infer. Their principles taking away all connexion between the argument and what they would argue by it.

IV.

2. We have also too much reason to add, *That as the supposition of such a Being or sort of Beings can have no sufficient ground; so it is equally unconceivable that it can be intended for any good end.* Not that we think the last assertion a sufficient sole proof of this. For we easily acknowledge that it is possible enough men may harmlessly and with innocent intentions attempt the building very weighty and important Truths upon weak and insufficient foundations. Hoping they have offer'd that as a support unto Truth which proves only an useless cumber. Nor were it just to impute Treachery where there is ground for the more charitable censure that the misadventure proceeded only from want of judgment and shortness of discourse. But it is neither needful, nor seemly, the charity which can willingly wink, in some cases, should therefore be quite blind. Or that no difference should be made of well-meant mistakes, and mischief thinly hid, and covered over with specious pretences.

And let it be soberly considered, what can the design be, after the cashiering of all solid grounds for the proving of a Deity, at length

to

to acknowledge it upon none at all? As if their acknowledgment must owe it self, not to their reason, but their courtesie. And when they have done what they can, to make the rest of men believe they have no need to own any God at all, and they can tell how all that concerns the making and governing the world, may well enough be dispatcht without any. Yet at last they will be so generous as to be content there shall be one however.

What, I say, can the design of this be, that they who have contended with all imaginable obstinacy against the most plain and convincing evidences, that do even defie cavil; have quite fought themselves blind, and lost their eyes in the encounter: so that they are ready to swear the Sun is a clod of dirt, and noon-day light is to them the very blackness of darkness. They cannot see a Deity incircling them with the brightest beams and shining upon them with the most conspicuous glory, through every thing that occurs, and all things that encompass them on every side. And yet when all is done, and their thunder-struck eyes make them fancy they have put out the Sun, they have won the day, have cleared the field, and are absolute victors; they have vanquished the whole power of their most dreaded enemy, the light that reveals God in his works. After all this without any inducement at all, and having triumpht over every thing that look'd like an argument to prove it. They vouchsafe to say however of their own accord *There is a God:*

Surely if this have any design at all, it must be a very bad one. And see whither it tends. They have now a God of their own making. And all the Being he hath depends upon their grace and favour. They are not his creatures, but he is theirs. A precarious Deity, that shall be as long, and what, and where they please to have him. And if he displease them, they can think him back into nothing. Here seems the depth of the design. For see with what cautions and limitations they admit him into being. There shall be a God provided he be not meddling, nor concern himself in their affairs, to the crossing of any inclinations or humours which they are pleased shall command and govern their lives. Being conscious that if they admit of any at all, that shall have to do with their concerns, he cannot but be such as the ways they resolve on will displease. Their very shame will not permit them to call that God, which if he take any cognisance at all of their course will dislike it. And herein that they may be the more secure, they judge it the most prudent course not to allow him any part or interest in the affairs of the world at all.

Yet all this while they court him at a great rate, and all Religion is taken away, under pretence of great piety: Worship they believe he cares not for, because he is full and needs nothing. In this world he must not be, for it is a place unworthy of him. He must have had no hand in framing. Nor can they think it fit he should have any in the government of it.

For

For it would be a great disturbance to him, and interrupt his pleasures. The same thing as if certain licentious Courtiers impatient of being governed should address themselves to their Prince in such a form of speech, that it is beneath him to receive any homage from them, it would too much debase Majesty, that his Dominions afford no place fit for his residence; and therefore it would be convenient for him to betake himself into some other Country that hath better air and accommodation for delight. That Diadems and Scepters are burdensome things. Which therefore if he will quit to them, he may wholly give up himself to ease and pleasure.

Yea and whatsoever would any way tend to evince his necessary existence, is with the same courtship laid aside (although if he do not exist necessarily and of himself, he cannot have any existence at all; For as they do not allow him to be the cause of any thing, so they assign nothing to be the cause of him) that is, with pretence there is no need it should be demonstrated, because all men believe it without a reason; nature having imprest this belief upon the minds of all; or (which is all one) they having agreed to believe it because they believe it. But though they have no reason to believe a Deity, they have a very good one why they would seem to do so, that they may expiate with the people their irreligion by a collusive pretending against Atheism. And because they think it less plausible plainly to deny there is a

God, they therefore grant one to please the vulgar, yet take care it shall be one as good as none, lest otherwise they should displease themselves. And so their credit and their liberty are both cared for together.

Y.

But this covering is too short, and the art by which they would fit it to their design, when it should cheat others, deceives themselves. For it is most evident.

3. *That the Being with the pretended belief whereof they would mock the world is no God; and that consequently, while they would seem to acknowledge a Deity they really acknowledge none at all.*

Our contest hath not all this while been a strife about words; or concerning the name, but the thing it self. And not whether there be such a thing in being to which that name may with whatsoever impropriety be given, but whether there be such a Being as whereto it properly belongs. Supposing and taking for granted, as a matter out of question, that (even in their own sense) if such a Being, as we have described do exist; it is most properly God. And that they will not go about to call it, by another name. Or that they will not pretend this name agrees to any other thing so fitly as to him. And because we have already proved this Being doth exist; and that there can be but one such, it plainly follows theirs is in propriety of speech (even though he did exist) no God. And that, much less, should he appropriate the name, and exclude the only true God. For
since

since the high and dignifying elogies which they are wont to bestow upon their feigned Deity do plainly shew they would have it thought they esteem him the most excellent of all existent Beings; if we have proved a really existent Being to be more excellent than he, it is evident even upon their own grounds that this is God. Hither the Deity must be deferr'd. And theirs must yield, and give out. Inasmuch as we cannot suppose them so void of common sense as to say the less excellent Being is God; and the more excellent is no God. But if they should be so, whereas the controversie is not about the name, we have our main purpose in having proved there is, a being actually existent that hath all the real excellencies which they ascribe to their Deities, and infinitely more. And as concerning the name, who made them dictators to all the world? and the sole judges of the propriety of words? Or with what right or pretence will they assume so much to themselves? so as against the rest of the world to name that God, from which they cut off the principal perfections wont to be signified by that name? And if we speak of such perfections as tend to infer and establish Religion and Providence. Who but themselves did ever call that God, in the eminent sense that they supposed could not hear prayers, and thereupon dispense favours, relieve the afflicted, supply the indigent, and receive suitable acknowledgments? *They indeed* (saith a famed Writer of Roman History) *that exer-*

Τὸν αὐτὸν
τὸν αὐτὸν
αὐτὸν αὐτὸν
αὐτὸν αὐτὸν
ἔκ.

D Halicar-
nass. Ant.
Rom. 1 2.

cise themselves in the Atheistical sorts of Philosophy (if we may call that Philosophy) as they are wont to jeer at all appearances of the Gods, whether among the Greeks or the Barbarians will make themselves matter of laughter of our Histories, not thinking that any God takes care of any man.---Let the story he there tells shift for it self, In the mean time it appears they escap'd not the infamy of *Atheists*, who (what ever Deities they might imagine besides) did deny Gods presence and regard to men. Which sort of persons he elsewhere often animadverts upon.

But do we need to insist that all the rest of the world acknowledged no Gods, whom they did not also worship? what meant their Temples, and Altars, their Prayers and Sacrifices? or did they take him for God, whom they believed to take no care of them, or from whom they expected no advantage? Even the Barbarous *Scythians* themselves understood it most inseparably to belong to a Deity to be beneficent when they upbraidingly tell *Alexander*, That if he were a God (as they it seems had heard he vogue'd himself) he should bestow benefits upon men, and not take from them what was their own.

See their
Ambassa-
dours
Oration in
D. Curti-
us.

Lit. non
posse sua-
viter vivi,
ἔκ.

And by the way it is observable how contradictory and repugnant, the Epicurean sentiments are, in this, even to themselves: that speaking of friendship (of which they say many generous and brave things) they (gallantly) profess (as *Plutarch* testifies of them) that it is
a more

a more pleasant thing to benefit others than to receive benefits ones self. They yet while they seem so greatly concern'd that their Gods be every way most perfectly happy deny to them this highest and most excellent part of felicity. that a virtuous man may a great deal more benefit the world, than they; and, consequently, have more pure and lively relishes of a genuine and refined pleasure.

*Vid. & lib.
maxime
cum prin-
cip. viris
Phil. &c.*

Upon the whole, it is manifest they so maim the notion of God, as to make it quite another thing. And if they think to wipe off any thing of the foul and odious blot wherewith their avow'd irreligion hath stain'd their name and memory, by the acknowledgment of such a God: They effect the like thing by it, and gain as much to the reputation of their piety, as he should, of his loyalty, who being accus'd of Treason against his Prince, shall think to vindicate himself, by professing solemnly to own the King. Provided you only mean by it the King of Clubs; or any such painted one the pack affords.

But here it may be demanded, is every misapprehension of God to be understood as a denial of his Being? If so, whom can we undertake to assail of Atheism? or who can certainly acquit himself? For how impossible is it to be sure we have no untrue conception of a Being so infinitely, by our own confession, above all our thoughts? Or how is it to be avoided, in somewhat or other to think amiss of so unknown and incomprehensibly excellent

lent a Being? Either by detracting somewhat that belongs to it, or attributing somewhat that belongs not? And since many, we are sure, have thought and spoken unworthily of God, besides Epicureans, are all these to go into the account of Atheists? Or whereas it is commonly wont to be said, whatsoever is in God, is God: how can they who deny any thing of him, which is really in him be excused of denying his whole being? or where will we fix the bounds of our censure?

Many things should be said (if we will speak at all) to so manifold an enquiry. But it belongs not to the design of this discourse to examine and discuss all mens sentiments of God, that have been exposed to the view of the world; or arbitrate among the dissenting parties. Much less to explain or abet every School-maxim that hath reference to this theme. The Authors or lovers whereof will be sufficiently prompted by their own Genius to do, at least as much as can be requisite herein. But whatever the real sameness is supposed to be, of the things attributed to God, it is acknowledged we cannot but conceive of them as divers. And so, that our conception of any one is not adequate to the entire object (which is confessed incomprehensible.) Yet any one attribute gives a true notion of the object so far as it reaches, though not a full. As I may be said truly to see a man, when I only see his face, and view not every part and limb; or to know him, while yet I have not had opportunity to discern

discern every quality in his temper, and what his dispositions and inclinations in all respects are. Moreover it's one thing to deny any Divine perfection, another only not to know it.

And such meer nescience is so far from being guilty of the horrid crime of Atheism, that it's not so much as culpable further than as it is obstinately persisted in against sufficient evidence: for we are not obliged to know every thing, but what is to us knowable, and what we are concerned to know. Again (and which is most considerable to our purpose) we are not concerned to know what God is in himself, otherwise than as we may thereby know what he is in relation to us, *viz.* as he is the Author of our Beings, the governour of our lives and actions, and thereupon the object of our Religion. For a religious respect unto him is the very end of that knowledge. Now, if any other than that sort of persons we oppose have taken up apprehensions of him, not so suitable to that end; it were to be wisht they saw it, and would unthink all those thoughts? But surely, they who most professedly contend against the very notions themselves which directly influence all our practice toward God, so considered, would suggest such as are wholly inconsistent therewith, who oppose the knowledge of God to the end of that knowledge; and do not meerly mistake the way to that end, while they are aiming at it, but most avowedly resist and disclaim the end it self; are to be distinguished from them who
pro-

professedly intend that same end, only see not wherein their misapprehensions are prejudicial and repugnant to it: otherwise are ready to reject them. And the former are therefore most justly to be singled out and designed the objects of our directest opposition. Nor are they so fitly to be opposed under any other notion as that of Atheists. For since our knowledge of God ought chiefly to respect him in that forementioned relative consideration, and the enquiry what is God? signifies, *as it concerns us*, what is the object of Religion? They denying any such thing, deny there is a God. Nor do they deny him in that relative consideration only; but (as every relation is founded in somewhat that is absolute) the very reason of their denying him, *so*, is that they deny in him those absolute and positive perfections that render him *such*, as certain of those do that have been proved to belong to him. Which is that we have next to consider, *viz.*

VI. 4. *That it may evidently be deduced from what hath been said, tending to prove those things of God which are included in the notion of him, and from that notion it self, that he is such as can converse with men.*

That is, having proved [*that there is an eternal self-subsisting independent necessary being of so great activity, life, power, wisdom, and goodness as to have been the maker of this world*] And by this medium [*that we see this world is in being, which otherwise could never have been, much less such as we see it is.*] It plainly follows

lows that this great Creator can have influence upon the Creatures he hath made in a way suitable to their natures. It follows I say from the same medium [the present visible existence of this world which could not otherwise be now in being] that *he can* thus have influence upon his creatures: For it is hence manifest that he doth; they depend on him; and are sustained by him: Nor could more subsist by themselves than they could make themselves, or of themselves have sprung out of nothing.

And if it were possible they could, being raised up into Being, continue in Being of themselves: Yet since our present question is not concerning what they *need*, but what God *can do*. And our adversaries in the present cause, do not (as hath been noted) upon any other pretence deny that he doth concern himself in the affairs of the universe, but *that he cannot*, (that is, that it consists not with his felicity, and he cannot, not be happy.) Is it not plain that he can with the same facility, continue the influence which he at first gave forth? And with as little prejudice to his felicity? For if it be necessary to him to be happy, or impossible not to be so; he must be ever so. His happiness was not capable of being discontinued so long as while he made the world, settled the several orders and kinds, and formed the first individuals of every kind of creatures. Therefore having done this, and without diminution to his happiness, was it a more toilsome and less tolerable labour to keep things

as they were, than to make them so? If it was (which no man that understands common sense would say) surely that blind thing which they more blindly call *nature* (not understanding or being able to tell what they mean by it) and would have be the only cause of all things, acting at first to the uttermost, and having no way to recruit its vigour and reinforce it self, its labour and business being so much increased, had jaded and grown weary; had given out, and patiently suffered all things to dissolve and relapse into the old chaos long ago. But if the labour was not greater to continue things in the state wherein they were made than to make them, surely a wise intelligent Deity, which we have proved made them, could as well sustain them being made; as their brutal and (as unintelligible as) unintelligent nature do both.

So much then of intercourse, God could have with his creatures as *his continual communication of his influence* to be received by them amounts to. And then, man, not being excluded their number, must share in this possible privilege according to the capacity of his nature.

And inasmuch as we have also proved (more particularly) concerning man, that he immediately owes the peculiar excellencies of his intelligent nature, as it's such, to God only. It is apparently consequent, that having formed this his more excellent creature according to his own more express likeness, stamp it with the

the glorious characters of his living image, given it a nature suitable to his own, and thereby made it capable of rational and intelligent converse with him. He hath it ever in his power to maintain a continual converse with this creature, by agreeable communications. By letting in upon it the vital beams and influences of his own light and love, and receiving back the return of its grateful acknowledgements and praises. Wherein its manifest he should do no greater thing than he hath done. For who sees not that it is a matter of no greater difficulty to converse with, than to make a reasonable creature? Or who would not be ashamed to deny that he who hath been the only Author of the soul of man, and of the excellent powers and faculties belonging to it, can more easily sustain what he hath made? And converse with that his creature suitably to the way wherein he hath made it capable of his converse?

Whereto, the consideration being added of his *gracious nature* (manifested in this creation it self) it is further evident, that he is (as things are now ordered) whercof more hereafter) not only *able*, but *apt* and *ready* to converse with men in such a way as shall tend to the improving of their being unto that *blessedness* whereof he hath made them naturally capable. If their own voluntary alienation and aversion to him (yet not overcome) do not obstruct the way of that intercourse.

And

And even this were sufficient to give foundation to a Temple, and both afford encouragement and infer an obligation to Religion; although no other perfection had been or could be demonstrated of the Divine Being, than what is *immediately* to be collected from his works, and the things whereof he hath been the sole and most arbitrary Author. For what if no more were possible to be proved, have we not, even by thus much, a representation of an object sufficiently worthy of our homage and adoration? He that could make and sustain such a world as this, how unexpressibly doth he surpass in greatness the most excellent of all mortal creatures! To some or other, of whom, upon some (meerly accidental) dignifying circumstances, we justly esteem our selves to owe a dutiful observance and subjection.

If he did not comprehend within his own Being *simply all* perfection: If there were many Gods, and Worlds besides; and he only the Creator and absolute Lord of our *vortex*, were not that enough to entitle him to all the obedience and service we could give him? and enable him sufficiently to reward it? and render his presence and cherishing influences (which he could every where disperse within this circle and limited portion of the universe) even infinitely covetable and desirable to us?

Yea, if he were only the entire Author of our own particular Being, how much more is that than the partial subordinate interest of an humane Parent? To whom (as even an Epicurean

curcan would confess) *nature* it self urges and exacts a duty. The refusal whereof, even Barbarian ingenuity would abhor, yea and brutal instinct condemn? How much greater and more absolute is the right which the parentage of our whole being challenges? If every man were created by a several God, whose creative power were confined to only one such creature, and each one were the solitary product, and the charge of an appropriate Deity; whose dominion the state of things would allow to be extended so far, only, and no further, were there therefore no place left for Religion? Or no tie unto love, reverence, obedience, and adoration, because the Author of my being comprehended not in himself all perfection? when as yet he comprehended so much as to be the sole cause of all that is in me? And his power over me, and his goodness to me, are hereby supposed the same, which the *only one God*, truly hath and exerciseth towards all? If *all* that I am and have be from him, I cannot surely owe to him *less than all*?

Such as have either had, or supposed themselves to have, their particular tutelary Genii, (of whom there will be more occasion to take notice hereafter) though they reckoned them but a sort of deputed or vicarious Deities, underlin Gods whom they never accounted the causes of their being; yet how have they coveted and gloried to open their breasts, to become their Temples, and entertain the converse of those (supposed) Divine inhabitants?

If they had taken one of these, to be their alone Creator, how much greater had their veneration and their homage been? This it may be hoped, will be thought sufficiently proved in this discourse (at least to have been so by some or other) *that we are not of our selves*; and that our extraction is to be fetcht higher than from matter, or from only humane progenitors. Nothing that is terrene and mortal could be the author of such powers as we find in our selves. We are most certainly the offspring of some or other Deity. And he that made us knows us thoroughly, can apply himself inwardly to us, receive our addressees and applications, our acknowledgments and adoration. Whereunto we should have even upon these terms great and manifest obligation, although nothing more of the excellency and perfection of our Creator were certainly known to us.

- VII. But it hath been further shewn that the necessary being from whence we sprang, is also an *absolutely and infinitely perfect Being*. That necessary Being cannot be less perfect, than to include the entire and inexhaustible fulness of all being and perfection. That therefore the God to whom this notion belongs, must, consequently, be every way sufficient to *all*, and be himself but *one*. The only source and fountain of all life and Being; the common basis and support of the universe; The absolute Lord of this great Creation, and the central object of the common concurrent Trust, fear, love, and other

other worship of his Intelligent and reasonable creatures.

And therefore there remains no greater or other difficulty in apprehending how he can, without disturbance to himself, or interruption of his own felicity, intend all the concerns of his creatures, apply himself to them according to their several exigencies, satisfy their desires and cravings, inspect and govern their actions and affairs; than we have to apprehend a *Being absolutely and every way perfect*. Whereof if we cannot have a distinct apprehension all at once, *i. e.* though we cannot comprehend every particular perfection of God in the same thought (as our eye cannot behold at one view every part of an over-large object unto which however, part by part, it may be successively apply'd) we can yet in the *general* apprehend him absolutely perfect; or such to whom we are sure no perfection is wanting. And can successively contemplate *this* or *that*, as we are occasionally led to consider them: And can answer to our selves difficulties that occur to us, with this easie, sure, and ever ready solution; *that he can do all things, That nothing is too hard for him, That he is full, all-sufficient, and every way perfect*. Whereof we are the more confirmed that we find we cannot by the utmost range of our most enlarged thoughts, ever reach any bound or end of that perfection which yet we must conclude is necessarily to be attributed to an absolutely perfect Being.

And this we have reason to take for a very sufficient answer to any doubt that can arise, concerning the possibility of his converse with us, unless we will be so unreasonable as to pretend that what is brought for solution hath greater difficulty in it than the doubt. Or that because we cannot apprehend at once, *infinite perfection*, therefore it cannot be, which were as much as to say, that it cannot be because it is infinite; for it were not infinite if we could distinctly apprehend it. And so were to make it a reason against it self, which is most injuriously and with no pretence attempted, except we could shew an inconsistency in the terms which it is plain we can never do; and should most idly attempt. And it were to make our present apprehension the measure of all reality; against our experience, which (if our indulgence to that self-magnifying conceit do not suspend our farther enquiries and researches) would daily bring to our notice things we had no apprehension of before.

It were instead of that just and laudable ambition of becoming our selves like God in his imitable perfections, to make him like our selves. The true model of the Epicurean Deity.

Nor can any thing be more ealie than that wherein we pretend so great a difficulty; that is to apprehend somewhat may be more perfect than we can apprehend. What else but proud ignorance can hinder us from seeing that the more we know, the more there is that we know not? How often are we out-done by creatures of
of

of our own order in the Creation ! How many men are there whom we are daily constrain'd to admire, as unspeakably excelling us, and whom we cannot but acknowledge to be far more knowing, discerning, apprehensive of things, of more compos'd minds, of more penetrating judgments, of more quick and nimble wits, easily turning themselves to great variety of objects and affairs without distraction and confusion, of more equal and dispassionate tempers, less liable to commotion and disturbance than our selves.

How absurd and senseless a pretence is it, against the thing it self, *that we cannot apprehend* an infinite perfection in one common fountain of all perfection ; or because we cannot go through a multitude of businesses without distraction, that therefore he that made us and all things cannot. If we would make our selves the measure, 'tis likely we should confess we were out-strip, when we are told that

Julius Caesar could dictate letters when he was intent upon the greatest affairs to four (and if he had nothing else to divert him to seven) Secretaries at once. That *Cyrus* could call by name all the Souldiers in his numerous Army. With divers other strange instances of like nature. And since the perfections of some so far

Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. 7. c. 25. Id. l. 7. c. 24. vid. & Xenoph. de Cyr. Pad. l. 5. Who

though he expressly say not he knew all the Souldiers names, but seems rather to mean it of their Officers (for saith he, he reckon'd it an absurd thing a Mechanick should know the names of all his Tools, &c. And a General not know the names of his Captains under him, &c.) yet he saith, the Souldiers wonder'd

ὅτι οὐκ ἔμελλεν.

exceed the measure of the *most*, why is it then unconceivable that Divine perfection should so far surpass *all*, as that God may intend the affairs of the world according to the several exigencies of his creatures without any ungrateful diversion to himself, or diminution to his felicity? And since they who partake of some and but a small portion of perfection only; can be concern'd in *many affairs* with *little trouble*, why cannot he that comprehends *all perfection* be concern'd in *all* without *any*? For though we have in what hath been last said endeavoured to represent it as not so unapprehensible as is pretended that it *may be so*, we take it in the mean time as formerly sufficiently proved that *so it is*, That God is a being absolutely perfect, or that includes eminently all perfection in himself.

VIII. Which general perfection of his Being as it modifies all his attributes, so we shall particularly take notice that it doth so, as to those that have a more direct influence upon, and tend more fully to evince his *conversableness with men*. As first: *His wisdom or knowledge* (for we need not be so curious as at present to distinguish them) must be *omniscience*. About which, if any place were left for rational doubt, it would be obvious to them to alledge it, who are of slower inclinations towards Religion. And object (against all applications to, or expectations from him) That if we be not sure he knows *simply all things* so as wisely to consider them, and resolve fitly about them,
it

it will be no little difficulty to determine, which he doth, and which not ; or to be at a certainty that this or that concernment of theirs about which they might address themselves to him be not among the *unknown things*. At least, we shall the less need to be curious in distinguishing, or to consider what things may be supposed rather than other, to be without the compass of his knowledge; if it appear that it universally encompasses all things. Or that nothing can be without its reach. And because we suppose it, already, out of doubt, that the true notion of God imports a Being absolutely or every way perfect; nothing else can be doubted in this matter, but, *whether the knowledge of all things be a perfection?*

The greatest difficulty that hath troubled some in this matter hath been, *How it is possible there should be any certain knowledge of events yet to come, that depend upon a free and self-determining cause.* But methinks we should not make a difficulty to acknowledge that to know these things, imports greater perfection, than not to know them; and then it would be very unreasonable, because we cannot shew how this or that thing was performed, which manifestly is done; therefore to deny that it is done at all. So far is it that we can with any shew of reason conclude against any act of God from our ignorance of the manner of it, that we should reckon it very absurd to conclude so, concerning any act of our own, or our ability thereto. What if it were hitherto an un-

known thing, and impossible to be determined; how the act of vision is performed by us: were it a wise conclusion, that therefore we neither do nor can see? How much more rash and presuming a confidence were it to reason thus concerning the Divine acts and perfections! would we not in any such case be determined rather by that which is more evident, than by what is more obscure? As in the assigned instance: we should have but these two propositions to compare [that I do (or have such a perfection belonging to me that I can) see] and [that whatsoever act I do or can do, I am able to understand the course and method of natures operation therein.] And thereupon to judge which of these two is more evident. Wherein it may be supposed there's no man in his wits to whom the determination would not be ealie. Accordingly in the present case we have only these two assertions that can be in competition in point of evidence, between which we are to make a comparison and a (consequent) judgment, *viz.* [whatsoever perfection belongs to a Being absolutely perfect, enabling it to do this or that, the wit of man can comprehend the distinct way and manner of doing it] and [it imports greater perfection to know all things, than to be ignorant of some] and here surely whosoever shall think the determination difficult, accounts the wit of man so exceeding great that he discovers his own to be very little. For what can the pretence of evidence be in the *former* assertion?

on? Was it necessary that he in whose choice it was whether we should ever know any thing or no, should make us capable of knowing every thing belonging to his own being? Or will we adventure to be so assuming, as while we deny it to God that he knows all things, to attribute to our selves that we do? But if we will think it not altogether unworthy of us to be ignorant of some thing, what is there of which we may with more probability or with less disparagement be thought so, than the *manner of Gods knowing things*? And what place is there for complaint of inevidence in the *latter*? Is not that knowledge more perfect, which so fully already comprehends all things, as upon that account to admit of no increase; than that which shall be every day growing, and have a continual succession of new objects emerging and coming into view, before, altogether unknown? And will not that be the case if we suppose *future contingencies* to lie conceal'd from the penetrating eye of God? For whatsoever is future, will some time be present, and then we will allow such contingencies to be known to him. That is, that God may know them when we our selves can! And that nothing of that kind is known to him which is not at least knowable some way or other to our selves, at least successively, and one thing after another. We will perhaps, allow that prerogative to God in point of this knowledge, that *he* can know these things, now fall'n out, all at once, *we* but by degrees,
while

while yet there is not *any one* that is absolutely unknowable to us. But why should it be thought unreasonable to attribute an excellency to the knowledge of God above ours, as well in respect of the manner of knowing, as the multitude of objects, at once, known? we will readily confess in some creatures an excellency of their visive faculty above our own; that they can see things in that darkness, wherein they are, to us, invisible. And will we not allow that to the eye of God, which is as a flame of fire to be able to penetrate into the abstrusest darkness of futurity, though we know not the way how it is done; when yet we know that whatsoever belongs to the most perfect being, must belong to his? And that knowledge of all things, imports more perfection, than if it were lessened by the ignorance of any thing.

Some who have thought the certain foreknowledge of future contingencies not attributable to God, have reckoned the matter sufficiently excused; by this that it no more detracts from the Divine omniscience, to state without the object of it, things not possible, or that imply a contradiction (as they suppose these to do) to be known, than it doth from his omnipotency, that it cannot do what is impossible, or that implies a contradiction to be done.

But against this there seems to lie this reasonable exception, that the two cases appear not sufficiently alike: Inasmuch as the supposition

sition of the former will be found not to leave the blessed God equally entitled to omniscien-
 cy, as the latter to omnipotency. For [all
 things] should not be alike the object of both.
 And why should not *that* be understood to sig-
 nifie the knowledge of simply all things; as
 well as *this* the power of doing simply *all*
things? Or why should *all things* included in
 these two words, signifie so very diversly, that
 is *there* properly all things, *here* some things
 only. And why must we so difference the ob-
 ject of omniscien- and omnipotency? as to
 make that so much narrower than this? And
 then how is it *all things*, when so great a num-
 ber of things will be left excluded? Whereas
 from the object of omnipotency (that we may
 prevent what would be reply'd) there will be
 no exclusion of any thing. Not of the things
 which are actually already made; for they are
 still momentarily reproduc'd by the same power.
 Not of the actions and effects of free causes
 yet future; for when they become actual God
 doth certainly perform the part of the first cause
 (even by common consent) in order, to their
 becoming so; which is certainly doing some-
 what though all be not agreed what that part
 is. Therefore they are in the mean time to be
 esteemed within the object of omnipotency, or
 to be of the things which God can do, *viz.* as
 the first cause virtually including the power of
 the second.

But more strictly; all impossibility is either
 natural and absolute, or moral and condition-
 al,

nal. What is absolutely or naturally impossible, or repugnant in it self, is not properly *any thing*. Whatsoever *simple being* not yet existent we can form any conception of is *producible*, and so within the compass of omnipotency; for there is no repugnancy in simplicity. That wherein therefore we place natural impossibility, is the inconsistency of being *this thing*, whose notion is such, and *another wholly and entirely*; whose notion is divers, at the same time (that which, more barbarously than insignificantly, hath been wont to be called *impossibility*) But surely all things are properly enough said to be naturally possible to God, while all *simple beings* are producible by him, of which any notion can be formed; yea and *compounded* so as by their composition to result into a third thing. So that it is not an exception to say that it is naturally impossible this thing should be another thing, and yet be wholly it self still at once, that it should be and not be, or be without it self. There is not within the compass of actual or conceivable being, such a thing. Nor is it reasonable to except *such actions* as are naturally possible to other Agents, but not to him; As to walk, for instance, or the like. Inasmuch as, though the excellency of his nature permits not they should be done by him; yet since *their* power of doing them proceeds wholly from him, he hath it virtually and eminently in himself. As was formerly said of the infiniteness of his Being. And for *moral impossibility*, as to lye, to
do

do an unjust act; That God never does them proceeds not from *want of power*, but an *eternal aversion of will*. It cannot be said he is not able to do such a thing, *if he would*, but so is *his will* qualified and conditioned, by its own unchangeable rectitude, that he most certainly *never will*, or such things as are in themselves evil are never done by him, not through the defect of natural power, but from the permanent stability and fulness of all moral perfection. And it is not without the compass of *absolute omnipotency* to do what is but *conditionally impossible*. The absence of which restrictive condition, would rather bespeak impotency and imperfection than omnipotency. Therefore the object of omnipotence is *simply all things*. Why not of omniscience as well? It may be said [all things] as it signifies the object of omniscience is only restrained by the act or faculty, signified therewith in the same word, so as to denote the *formal object* of that faculty or act, *viz.* all *knowable things*. But surely that act must suppose some Agent, whereto that *knowable* hath reference. Knowable? to whom? to others, or to God himself? If we say the former, it is indeed a great honour we put upon God, to say he can know as much as others: if the latter, we speak absurdly, and only say he can know all that he can know. It were fairer to deny omniscience than so interpret it.

But if it be denied, what shall the pretence be? why, that it implies a contradiction future

Qualis res est talis est rei cognitio. Si itaque res sit incerta (puta incertum est locus sit futurum, an non) non datur ulla certa ejus notitia. Quomodo enim fieri potest ut certo sciatur, ad fore quod certo futurum non est, &c. Strangius de voluntate & Actionibus Dei, &c. l. 3. c. 6. (as he there objects to himself.)

And it must be acknowledged that to *whom* any thing is uncertain, it is a contradiction that *to him* it should be certainly known. But that such things are uncertain to God needs other proof than I have met with, in what follows in that cited Author or elsewhere. All which will amount to no more than this, that such things as *we* cannot tell *how* God knows them, must needs be unknown to him. But since we are sure many such things have been certainly foretold by God (and, of them, such as, we may be also sure, he never intended to effect) we have reason enough to be confident that such things are not unknowable to him. And for the manner of his knowing them, it is better to profess ignorance about it, than attempt the explication thereof, either unintelligibly, as some have, to no purpose, or dangerously and impiously, as others have adventured to do, to very bad purpose. And it well becomes us to suppose an infinite understanding may have ways of knowing things which we know nothing of. To my apprehension, that last mentioned Author doth, with ill success, attempt an

an explication of Gods manner of knowing this sort of things, by the far less intelligible notion, of the indivisibility of eternity, comprehending (as he says) all the parts of time, not successively, but together. And though he truly say that the *Scotists* way of expressing how future contingents are present to God, *i. e.* according to their *objective and intentional beings*; only, affords us no account *why* God knows them, for which cause he rejects it; and follows that of the *Thomists*, who will have them to be present according to their *real and actual existence*. I should yet prefer the deficiency of the former way, before the contradictiousness and repugnancy of the latter; and conceive those words in the *Divine Dialogues*, as good an explication of the manner of his knowledge, as the case can admit, (which yet is but the *Scotists* sense) "That the whole evolution of times and ages, is so collectedly, and presentifickly represented to God, at once, *as if* all things and actions which ever were, are, or shall be, were at this very instant, and so always really present and existent before him. Which is no wonder, the animadversion and intellectual comprehension of God, being absolutely infinite, according to the truth of his Idea: I do therefore think that a sober resolution in this matter, That it seems more safe, to allow this priviledge to the infinite understanding of God, than to venture at all to circumscribe his omniscience: For though it may

Dr. Mort.

Of *Bathymis* in the same *Dialogues*.

“ may safely be said, that he knows not any
 “ thing that really implies a contradiction to
 “ be known ; yet we are not assured but that
 “ may seem a contradiction to us, that is not
 “ so really in it self.

Only, as to that instance of the *commensurableness* of the diagonal line of a Quadrate to one of the sides ; whereas , though there are great difficulties on both sides, *viz.* that *these are commensurable*, and *that they are not* ; yet any mans judgment would rather incline to the latter as the ealier part : I should therefore also think it more safe, to make choice of that, as the parallel of the present difficulty.

IX. Upon the whole we may conclude that the knowledge of God is *every way perfect* ; and being so, extends to all our concernments. And that nothing remains, *upon that account* to make us decline applying our selves to Religious converses with him ; or deny him the honour and entertainment of a Temple. For which we shall yet see further cause, when we consider next, *That his power is also omnipotence*. Which (though the discourse of it have been occasionally somewhat mingled with that of the last) might be directly spoken of for the fuller eviſtion of that his conversableness with men which Religion and a Temple do suppose. Nor indeed is it enough that he knows our concernments, except he can also provide effectually about them, and dispose of them to our advantage. And we cannot doubt, but he, who could create us, and

and such a world as this, can do so, even though he were supposed not omnipotent. But even that, it self, seems a very unreasonable supposition; that less than infinite power should suffice to the creation of any thing. For however liable it may be to controvertie, what a *second cause* might do herein; being assisted by the infinite power of the first: It seems altogether unimaginable, to us, how, though the power of all men were not in one (which we will easily suppose to be a very vast power) it could, alone, be sufficient to make the minutest atom arise into being out of nothing. And that all the matter of the universe hath been so produc'd out of nothing, it will be no great presumption to suppose already fully proved; in that, though any such thing as necessary matter were admitted, yet its essential unalterableness would render it impossible it should be the matter of the universe. Therefore when we cannot devise what finite power can ever suffice (suppose we it never so much increased, but still finite) to the doing of that which we are sure is done, what is left us to suppose, but that the power which did it is simply infinite: much more when we consider, not only that something actually is produced out of nothing, but do also seriously contemplate the nature of the production. Which carries so much of amazing wonder in it every where, that even the least and most minute things might serve for sufficient instances of the unlimited greatness of that power which made them. As would be seen;

T if

In his
Microgra-
phia.

if we did industriously set our selves to compare the effects of Divine Power with those of humane art and skill. As is the ingenious and pious observation of the most worthy Mr. *Hooke*, who upon his viewing with his Microscope the point of a small and very sharp needle (than which we cannot conceive a smaller thing laboured by the hand of man) takes notice of sundry sorts of natural things, "That
"have points many thousand times sharper :
"those of the hairs of insects, &c. *That* appearing broad, irregular and uneven, having
"marks upon it, of the rudeness and bungling
"of *art*. So unaccurate (saith he) is it in all
"its productions, even in those that seem most
"neat, that, if examined truly with an organ
"more acute than that by which they were
"made, the more we see of their shape the
"less appearance will there be of their beauty :
"Whereas in the works of *Nature* the deepest
"discoveries shew us the greatest excellencies.
"An evident Argument that he that was the
"Author of these things was no other than
"omnipotent, being able to include as great a
"variety of parts in the yet smallest discern-
"able point, as in the vaster bodies (which
"comparatively are called also points) such as
"the Earth, Sun, or Planets. And I may add,
when those appear but points, in comparison
of his so much vaster work, how plainly doth
that also argue to us the same thing ?

And let us strictly consider the matter. Omnipotency as hath been said imports a power
of

of doing all *things possible to be done*, or indeed, *simply all things*; unto which passive power, an active one must necessarily correspond. That is, there is nothing in it self possible to be done, but it is also possible to some one or other to do it. If we should therefore suppose God not omnipotent, it would follow some one or other were able to do more than God. For though possibility do *import* a non-repugnancy in the thing to be done; yet it also *connotes* an ability in some Agent to do it. Wherefore there is nothing possible which some Agent cannot do. And if so, that Agent must either be God or some other. *To say it is God*, is what we intend. That is, there is nothing possible which God cannot do. Or he can do all things. *But to say it is some other and not God*, were to open the door to the above-mentioned horrid consequence; which no one that acknowledges a God (and we are not now discoursing with them who simply deny his Being) would not both blush and tremble to avow.

Some indeed have so over-done the business here as to deny any *intrinsic* possibility of any thing, and say that things are only said to be possible because God can do them; which is the same thing as thus to explain Gods omnipotency, *i. e.* that he can do all things which he can do. And makes a Chimæra no more impossible in it self to be produced than a not yet existent man. And the reason of the denial is that what is *only possible* is nothing; and

therefore can have nothing intrinsecal to it. As if it were not sufficient to the intrinsecal possibility of a thing, that its Idea have no repugnancy in it. Yet *entire and full possibility* connotes a reference to the productive power of an Agent; so that it is equally absurd to say that things are *only possible*, because there is no repugnancy in their Idea's, as it is to say they are *only possible* because some Agent can do them. Inasmuch as the *entire possibility* of their existence imports both, *that there is no repugnancy in their Idea's* (which if there be, they are every way nothing, as hath been said before) and also, *that there is a sufficient power to produce them*. Therefore, whereas we might believe him sufficient every way *for us*, though we did not believe him *simply omnipotent*; how much more fully are we assured when we consider that he is? Whereof also no place of doubt can remain, this being a most unquestionable perfection, necessarily included, in the notion of an absolutely perfect Being. But here we need not further insist, having no peculiar adversary (*in this matter singly*) to contend with, (as indeed he would have had an hard province who should have undertaken to contend against omnipotency.)

And now joyn herewith again the *boundlessness of his goodness*; which upon the same ground of his absolute perfection, must be infinite also, (and which it is of equal concernment to us to consider, that we may understand he not only can effectually provide about
our

our concernments, but is most graciously inclined so to do.) And then what rational inducement is wanting to Religion and the Dedication of a Temple? If we consider the joynt encouragement that arises from so unlimited power and goodness? or what man would not become entirely devoted to *him*, who, by the one of these, we are assured, *can do all things*, and by the other, *will do what is best*. †

† Δοξαζόμενος
ἀπὸ πάντων
βιολογῶν ὡς
τὸ ἀέριστον.
Phil. Jud.
de Abr.

Nor therefore is there any thing immediately needful to our present purpose, *the eviction of Gods conversableness with men*, more than hath been already said. That is, there is nothing else to be thought on, that hath any nearer influence thereon. The things that can be supposed to have *such* influence being none else than his *Power, Knowledge and Goodness*, which have been particularly evinced from the Creation of the world, both to have been in some former subject, and to have all, originally met in a necessary being, that alone could be the Creator of it. Which necessary Being, *as it is such*, appearing, also, to be infinite and absolutely perfect; the influence of these cannot but the more abundantly appear to be such as *can* and may most sufficiently and fully correspond both in general to the several exigencies of *all creatures*, and more especially to all the real necessities and reasonable desires of *man*. So that our main purpose seems already gained.

Yet because it may be grateful when we are persuaded that things are so, to fortifie (as

much as we can) that perswasion. And because our perswasion concerning these attributes of God will be still liable to assault unless we acknowledge him *every where present*. Nor can it well be conceivable, otherwise, how the influence of his knowledge, power, and goodness can be so universal, as will be thought necessary to infer an universal obligation to Religion. It will be therefore requisite to add somewhat concerning his *Omnipresence*, or, because some that love to be very strictly critical will be apt to think that term restrictive of his presence to the universe (as supposing to be *present* is relative to somewhat, one may be said *present* unto, whereas they will say without the universe is nothing) we will rather chuse it to call it *immensity*. For though it would sufficiently answer our purpose that his presence be universal to all his creatures; yet even this is to be proved by such arguments as will conclude him *simply immense*. Which therefore wil with the greater advantage infer the thing we intend.

This part of Divine perfection we will acknowledge to have been impugned by some that have professed much devotedness to a Deity and Religion; we will therefore charitably suppose that opposition to have been joyned with inadvertency of the ill tendency of it, that is, how unwarrantably it would maim the notion of the former and shake the foundations of the latter. Nor therefore ought that charity to be any assay to a just zeal for so great concerns.

It

It seems then, first, manifestly repugnant to the notion of an infinitely perfect Being to suppose it less than *simply immense*. For, upon that supposition, it must either be limited to some certain place, or excluded out of all. The latter of these would be most openly to deny it; as hath, with irrefragable evidence, been abundantly manifested by the most learned Dr. More; whereto it would be needless and vain to attempt to add any thing. Nor is that the thing pretended to by the sort of persons I now chiefly intend.

Both in
his Dia-
logues and
Enchiridi-
on Meta-
phys.

And for the former, I would enquire; Is amplitude of essence no perfection? or were the confining of this Being to the *very minute*st space we can imagine, no detraction from the perfection of it? what if the amplitude of that glorious and ever-blessed Essence were said to be only of that extent (may it be spoken with all reverence, and resentment of the unhappy necessity we have of making so mean a supposition) as to have been confined unto that one Temple to which of old he chose to confine his more solemn Worship; that he could be essentially present only here at once and no where else, were this no detraction? They that think him only to replenish and be present by his essence in the highest heaven (as some are wont to speak) would they not confess it were a meaner and much lower thought to suppose that presence circumscribed within the so unconceivably narrower limits, as the walls of an house? If they would pre-

tend to ascribe to him *some perfection beyond this*; by supposing his essential presence commensurable to the vaster territory of the highest heavens, even by the same supposition should they deny to him greater perfection than they ascribe. For the perfection which in this kind they should ascribe were finite only, but that which they should deny were infinite.

Again, they will however acknowledge omnipotency a perfection included in the notion of an absolutely perfect Being; therefore they will grant, he can create another world (for *they* do not pretend to believe this infinite; and if they did, by their supposition, they should give away their cause) at any the greatest distance we can conceive from *this*: therefore so far his power can extend it self. But what, his power without his being? what then is his power? something, or nothing? nothing can do nothing; therefore not make a world. It is then some Being, and whose Being is it but his own? Is it a created Being? That is to suppose him first impotent, and then to have created omnipotency, when he could do nothing. Whence by the way, we may see to how little purpose that distinction can be applied in the present case of *essential* and *virtual* contact, where the essence and virtue cannot but be the same.

But shall it be said, he must in order to the creating such another world, locally move thither where he designs it? I ask then, but can he not *at the same time* create thousands of worlds

worlds at any distance from this round about it? No man can imagine this to be impossible to him that can do all things. Wherefore of such extent is his power and consequently his Being.

Will they therefore say he can immensely if he please diffuse his Being but he voluntarily contracts it; 'Tis answered that is altogether impossible to a Being that is whatsoever it is by a simple and absolute necessity: for whatsoever it is necessarily it is unalterably and eternally, or is *pure act* and in a *possibility* to be nothing which it already is not. Therefore since God can every where exert his power, he is necessarily, already, every where. And hence Gods immensity is the true reason of his immobility; there being no imaginable space which he doth not necessarily replenish.

Whence also the supposition of his being so confined (as was said) is immediately repugnant to the notion of a *necessary Being*, as well as of an *absolutely perfect*, which hath been argued from it.

We might moreover add that, upon the same supposition, God might truly be said to have made a creature greater than himself (for such this universe apparently were) and that he can make one (as they must confess who deny him not to be omnipotent) most unconceivably greater.

Nothing therefore seems more manifest than that God is immense; or (as we may express it) *extrinsically infinite*, with respect to place;

as

XI.

De Vocibus
Trinit.
P/ov. &c.

as well as *intrinsically*, in respect to the plenitude of his being and perfection. Only it may be requisite to consider, briefly, what is said against it, by the otherwise minded, that pretend not to deny his infinity in that other sense. Wherein that this discourse swell not beyond just bounds, their strength, *viz.* of argument (for it will not be so seasonable here to discuss with them the Texts of Scripture wont to be insisted on in this matter) shall be viewed as it is collected and gathered up in one of them. And that shall be *Curcellæus*, who gives it, as succinctly and fully, as any I have met with of that sort of men.

The Doctrine it self we may take from him thus. First (on the negative part by way of denial of what we have been hitherto asserting) he says, *The foundation* (that is of a distinction of *Maresius's* to which he is replying, for so occasionally comes in the discourse) *viz. the infinity of the Divine Essence, is not so firm as is commonly thought.*

And that therefore it may be thought less firm, he thinks fit to cast a slur upon it, by making it the Doctrine of the *Stoicks*, exprest by *Virgil*, *Jovis omnia plena* (as if it must needs be false because *Virgil* said it, though I could tell, if it were worth the while where *Virgil* speaks more agreeably to this sense than ours, according to which he might as well have interpreted this passage as divers Texts of Scripture. And then his Authority might have been of some value) And by *Lucan*, who helps it

it seems to disgrace and spoil it, *Jupiter est quodcumque vides, quocumque moveris* (he might if he had a mind to make it thought Paganish; have quoted a good many more, but then there might have been some danger it should pass for a common notion). Next he quotes some passages of Fathers that import dislike of it. About which we need not concern our selves. For the question is not what this or that man thought.

And then for the positive account of his own judgment in the case, having recited divers Texts out of the Bible that seemed as he apprehended to make against him. He would have us believe, that these all speak rather of Gods providence and power by which he concerns himself in all our works, words, and thoughts, wheresoever we live, than of the absolute infinity of his Essence.

And afterwards, *That God is by his Essence* Unto
in the supreme heaven, where he inhabits the in- which
accessible light, but thence he sends out from him- purpose
self a spirit or a certain force, whether he pleases, speaks at
large. Vol-
fuses, by which he is truly present and works there. kelius de
vera Relig.

Quia enim Dei & potentia & sapientia ad res omnes extenditur, uti & potestas sive imperium; ideo ubique præsens, omniaque numine suo complere dicitur, &c. l. 1. c. 27. Schliclingius Artic. de filio Dei. Ad Pl. 139. 6, 7. Nec loquitur David de spiritu sancto, qui peculiaris quidam Dei spiritus est, sed de spiritu Dei simpliciter. Nec dicit spiritum istum ubique re esse sed tantum docet nullum esse locum, ad quem is nequeat pertingere, &c. So also F. Socin. Smalcus. And (though not altogether so expressly as the rest) Vorstius, Crallius, &c.

But proceed we to his Reasons, which he saith are not to be condemned. We shall therefore

fore not condemn them so far as not to take notice of them; which trouble also the Reader may please to be at; and, afterward, do, as he thinks fit.

1. *That no difference can be conceived between God and creatures, if God as they commonly speak, be, wholly, in every point; or do fill all the points of the universe with his whole Essence. For so whatsoever at all is will be God himself.*

Ans. And that is most marvellous that the in-being of one thing in another must needs take away all their difference, and confound them each with other: which sure would much rather argue them distinct. For certainly it cannot, without great impropriety, be said that any thing is in it self: And is both the container and contained. How were these thoughts in his mind? and these very notions which he opposes to each other, so as not to be confounded with his mind, and consequently with one another? So that it's a great wonder he was not of both opinions at once. And how did he think his soul to be in his body, which, though substantially united with it (and that is somewhat more, as we will suppose he knew was commonly held, than to be intimately present) was not yet the same thing. However himself acknowledges the power and providence of God to be every where. And then at least every thing must it seems be the very power and providence of God. But he thought it may be only of confuting the words of *Lucan*, and cha-

chastising his poetick liberty. And if he would have been at the pains to turn all their strains and raptures into propositions, and so have gravely fallen to confuting them, he might perhaps have found as proper an exercise for his Logick as this. As for his talk of a whole, whereof we acknowledge *no parts* (as if he imagined the Divine Essence to be compounded of such, he should have said so and have proved it) 'tis an absurd scheme of speech which may be left to him, and them that use it to make their best of.

2. *No Idolatry can be committed if there be not the least point to be found, that is not wholly full of whole God. For whithersoever worship shall be directed, it shall be directed to God himself, who will be no less there than in heaven.*

Ans^r. This proceeds upon the supposition that the former would be granted as soon as it should be heard, as a self-evident principle, *that whatsoever is in another is that in which it is.* And so his consequence were most undeniable. But though we acknowledge God to be *in every thing*, yet so to worship him *in any thing*, as if his essential presence were confined thereto, while it ought to be conceived of as immense, this is Idolatry. And therefore they who so conceive of it as confin'd (or ty'd in any respect, wherein he hath not so ty'd it himself) are concerned to beware of running upon this rock.

3. *Nor can the opinion of Fanaticks be solidly refuted, who call themselves spiritual, when they*

they determine God to be all in all. To do not only good but evil things; because he is to be accounted to be essentially in all the atoms of the world, in whole; and as a common soul by which all the parts of the universe do act.

Ans. We may in time make trial whether they can be refuted or no; or whether any solid ground will be left for it. At this time it will suffice to say, that though he be present every where as a *necessary Being*, yet he acts as a *free cause*. And according as his wisdom, his good pleasure, his holiness, and justice do guide his action.

4. *So God will be equally present with the wicked and with the holy and godly, with the damned in Hell and Devils, as with the blessed in Heaven or Christ himself.*

Ans. So he will in respect of his *essential presence*. How he is otherwise (distinguishingly enough) present in his Temple, we shall have occasion hereafter to shew.

5. *That I say not how shameful it is to think, that the most pure and holy God should be as much in the most nasty places as in heaven, &c.* (I forbear to recite the rest of this uncleanly argument, which is strong in nothing but ill favour.) But for

Ans. How strange a notion was this of *Holiness*, by which it is set in opposition to corporal filthiness! As if an holy man should lose, or very much blemish his sanctity, by a casual fall into a puddle. Indeed if sense must give us measures of God, and every thing must be reckon-

reckoned an essence to him that is so to it; we shall soon frame to our selves a God altogether such a one as our selves. The Epicureans themselves would have been ashamed to reason or conceive thus of God, who tell us *the Divine Being is as little capable of receiving a stroke as the Inane*. And surely (in proportion) of any sensible offence, we might as well suppose him in danger, as Dr. More fitly expresseth it, to be hurt with a thorn, as offended with an ill smell.

In his
Dialogue;

We have then enough to assure us of Gods absolute immensity and omnipresence, and nothing of that value against it as ought to shake our belief herein. And surely the consideration of *this*, added to *the other* of his perfections (and which tends so directly to facilitate and strengthen our perswasion concerning the rest) may render us assuredly certain, that we shall find him a conversable Being. If we seriously apply our selves to converse with him, and will but allow him the liberty of that Temple within us, whereof we are hereafter (with his leave and help) to treat more distinctly and at large.

The end of the First Part.